



Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

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Press Release

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Reinvest Maryland Report Offers Strategies to Revitalize Communities

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission Focuses on Bolstering Cities, Towns

BALTIMORE – For more than a decade, Maryland leaders have supported a smart growth agenda to achieve many goals, from accommodating a growing population to protecting natural resources and the Chesapeake Bay. The latest strategy: renewing efforts to revitalize Maryland communities.

In response to a request from Governor Martin O'Malley and Lt. Governor Anthony Brown, the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission has produced *Reinvest Maryland: Accelerating Infill, Redevelopment & Community Revitalization*. The just-released [report](#) sets forth dozens of recommendations to help communities across Maryland improve their downtowns, strengthen their economies, add needed housing and even provide a streetscape facelift.

“Encouraging growth in our existing communities creates economic opportunities for middle class families, and, at the same time, relieves ecological pressure on farm and forest land. The release of the *Reinvest Maryland* report is a critical next step toward creating a smarter, more sustainable future for our State,” said Governor O'Malley. “I want to commend the Commission for its good work over the last several months. Leveraging their recommendations, *Reinvest Maryland* will help drive our efforts to better focus and coordinate initiatives like GreenPrint and AgPrint that target land preservation, and GrowthPrint which helps us better enhance our infill, redevelopment and revitalization programs.”

Directing growth to communities with existing infrastructure saves money by requiring fewer services, unlike development in far-flung areas that need new roads, schools, and water and sewer systems. It improves quality of life for existing residents. Moreover, many young people, seniors and business owners are demanding well-designed, walkable communities as a new model over traditional, more isolating growth patterns.

“We need to reinvest in Maryland’s great communities,” said Commission Chairman Jon Laria. “In this report, we set out recommendations to help us grow smarter to accomplish a whole host of goals statewide.”

Since the request from the governor and lieutenant governor in January, the Commission has undertaken the ambitious project of recommending ways to advance infill, redevelopment and revitalization statewide. Working closely with the Maryland

Department of Planning (MDP), which staffs the commission, as well as other state agencies, commission members analyzed the practices of Maryland communities, conducted interviews with public, private and nonprofit leaders, hosted public forums to vet preliminary recommendations and pored over prior studies and reports. The research provided insight into the best ways to create vibrant places with a range of housing, employment and transportation options.

The *Reinvest Maryland* report details more than 60 recommendations, such as making state community assistance programs more accessible, streamlining review processes for infill projects, focusing state resources to promote revitalization and creating financing mechanisms to support redevelopment. Recommendations are grouped into eight categories: vision, reinvestment programs, regulations/policies, financial tools, equity, community design and preservation, metrics and transit-oriented development.

The report highlights best practices in Maryland communities that have spurred reinvestment, national models of successful programs and initiative and in-depth studies of 10 Maryland communities and their reinvestment efforts. *Reinvest Maryland* also links to a new online searchable database of state programs supporting infill, redevelopment and revitalization.

In the coming months, commission work groups and MDP staff – as well as other state agencies – will tackle implementation on a variety of fronts.

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