



A Partnership of Neighborhoods, Developers and Government Working for Environmentally Sustainable Communities

Baltimore County Builders for the Bay Site Planning Roundtable Fact Sheet

Project Background and Introduction

The Baltimore County Builders for the Bay is a collaborative consensus initiative designed to comprehensively evaluate existing development practices with the goal of effectively protecting natural resources by utilizing more innovative and cost effective site design and land planning techniques. The effort was launched by the Baltimore County Government, Center for Watershed Protection and Alliance for Chesapeake Bay in June 2005. Goals included:

- aligning development practices with the goals of Baltimore County's Green Renaissance initiative and Chesapeake 2000 Bay Agreement.
- recommending changes to current development practices.
- documenting recommendations and action items in a consensus document endorsed by Roundtable members.

Why Baltimore County?

The decision to hold a Site Planning Roundtable in Baltimore County was based on several factors which included:

- Moderate growth is expected to continue and households are expected to increase by 10.3% by 2030. This figure represents an opportunity to encourage more environmentally-sensitive designs for new communities.
- As the amount of developable land continues to shrink in Baltimore County, new and innovative techniques will be necessary to encourage and promote efficient and environmentally-sensitive infill and redevelopment.
- The County government expressed an interest and committed staff and resources to the process.
- The County has a 40-year track record of progressive growth and natural resources management.
- The Home Builders Association of Maryland generated support for the project among its members.

Project Highlights

- The Baltimore County Builders for the Bay membership consisted of 65 dedicated members representing a wide range of professional backgrounds and experience drawn from the development community, local government, environmental groups, community associations and local utilities.
- Through the year-long consensus process, these members recommended more than 80 specific changes to Baltimore County's policies, codes and ordinances to promote more environmentally-sensitive and economically viable development, redevelopment and infill.
- Recommendations included:
 - Promoting the use of conservation landscaping on County owned lands
 - Establishing watershed-based stormwater criteria
 - Promoting design alternatives to conventional lot designs
 - Allowing desirable natural areas to meet open space requirements within the urban-rural demarcation line (URDL)
- An implementation plan was prepared identifying the action, responsible agency, and timeframe for each recommendation.

Next Steps

- A Steering Committee, consisting of key community and development representatives, County Department heads, Center for Watershed Protection and Alliance for Chesapeake Bay staff, will oversee implementation of the Roundtable recommendations.
- Over the next three years, County agencies will work to implement the recommendations through code, policy and regulatory changes.
- The results will be shared with residents, environmentalists, developers, and engineers so that changes are understood and put into practice.

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- Abell Foundation
- Baltimore County
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- National Association of Home Builders
- National Fish and Wildlife Federation
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For Further Information

- The document, *Recommended Model Development Principles for Baltimore County, Maryland* is available for download at: <http://www.cwp.org/BaltimoreCoBFBDocument.pdf>.
- Contact: Rebecca Winer-Skonovd, Center for Watershed Protection; Phone: 410-461-8323; Email: rrw@cwp.org.