



M A R Y L A N D

Office of Planning and Zoning

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Plan2040 Implementation Advisory Committee

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## **Plan2040 Implementation Advisory Committee**

DPW - Millersville Utilities Operations Center

Building A, Training Room

445 Maxwell Frye Rd

October 30, 2024

6:00 PM

**Committee members present:** Eric Devito, Anne Arundel Economic Development Services; Jon Korin, Bicycle Advisory Commission; Robert Silkworth, Board of Education; Sally Hornor, Citizen's Environmental Commission; Melanie-Hartwig Davis, Planning Advisory Board; Hamilton Chaney, Maritime Industry Advisory Board; Matthew Shaffer, Joan Oliver, Thuy Do, Fort Meade

**County staff and presenters:** Erin Karpewicz, Arundel Community Development Services; Janssen Evelyn, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Samuel Snead, Transportation Officer, Jenny Dempsey, Planning and Zoning Officer; Cindy Carrier, Planning Administrator; Michael Stringer, Senior Planner; Christine Duvall, Senior Planner

### **Welcome and Overview**

Janssen Evelyn, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, welcomed the Plan2040 Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) on behalf of County Executive Stuart Pittman and explained that the Committee is charged with monitoring the progress of Plan2040, the County's current General Development Plan (GDP). The Pittman Administration is committed to community-based planning and implementing Plan2040. Presenters will share progress and challenges. The meeting will focus on two priority issues: housing and transportation. Anne Arundel County faces a housing crisis; along with the rest of the State and the County. Housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable and supply does not meet the demand. When we propose policies to increase the supply of housing, the first and loudest concern we hear from the public is traffic congestion. Our most pressing concern is disconnecting housing from sprawl and dealing with congestion/traffic. We ask this group how we can think differently, creatively, and collaboratively to address these issues.

### **Status of Plan2040 Implementation**

Michael Stringer, Senior Planner, reviewed the agenda and provided progress updates on Plan2040 made by Anne Arundel County on implementing the Plan's strategies. The four main chapters of Plan2040 are the natural environment, built environment, healthy

communities, and healthy economy. He reviewed the purpose of the Plan2040 IAC: to monitor the progress of implementation and help determine priorities.

Mr. Stringer shared a snapshot of progress on Plan strategies, showing seventy-five percent of Plan2040 Strategies are *In Progress* or *Completed*. He reviewed key performance indicators that measure the effectiveness of Plan2040 implementation strategies. The Committee had the following questions and comments:

- The County needs to set clear targets for key indicators that measure outcomes, not just effort. The targets should be evaluated at some point to assess whether they need to be changed. Plan2040 includes direction in implementation to review targets and evaluate the effectiveness of plan implementation 4 years after adoption (in 2025 - the report will be available in 2026).
- Addressing septic systems by upgrading their technology or connecting to sewer is prohibitively expensive for homeowners. The Committee would like to hear more details on how the County is approaching financing to make these changes economically viable.
- Metrics on progress in complying with stormwater management permit requirements do not include the net effect of new development; they just measure retrofitting existing development.
- There are concerns that stormwater best management practices are not adequately maintained or performing as designed.
- There are opportunities for more collaboration with Fort Meade on upstream and downstream stormwater management and stream restoration efforts.
- The commercial real estate market in Anne Arundel County has been relatively strong and stable through the pandemic and recovery, in comparison to the more urban markets of Baltimore and Washington, DC.

At the previous Plan2040 IAC meetings, Committee members determined that the following issues should be prioritized: school capacity, affordable housing, transportation, parks and recreation in underserved areas, and resilient infrastructure. In this current meeting, the discussion will focus on housing and transportation.

### **Panel Presentations**

Erin Karpewicz, Chief Executive Officer of Arundel Community Development Services (ACDS), gave an overview of the scale of the need for housing in Anne Arundel County and policies, programs, and projects underway to address affordability, access, and housing stock. Two-thirds of Anne Arundel County residents commute outside of the County for work, and two-thirds of workers in the County live outside of the County and commute here for employment. With rising costs of rent, the number of housing units affordable to low- and moderate-income households has decreased in the last few years. A study in 2022 found that 12,456 renters are unserved by multifamily housing stock at a price they can afford. There is a need for production of all housing unit types at all price points to increase supply; an increase of available units is expected to ease prices. Anne Arundel County has the second-highest median sale price for houses and the lowest number of months of supply in the region. To afford a typical home in Anne Arundel County, a household needs an income of \$164,000, which is 168% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Anne Arundel County established the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and a dedicated revenue stream that has generated millions of dollars, significantly increasing the capacity of ACDS to engage in more affordable housing projects. The Trust Fund is being used to provide financial support for down payment and closing cost assistance, develop new housing units, and improve the affordability of rental units. So far in 2024, ACDS has settled on financing for six multi-family affordable housing communities supported with federal grants and Affordable Housing Trust Funds, developing or preserving 742 affordable units.

Federal pandemic relief funds have now largely ended, reducing financial resources for many programs, including eviction prevention. Anne Arundel is one of the few Counties in the State that continues to provide eviction prevention funds, though at a fraction of what was available during and shortly following the pandemic. With increased rents, there continues to be high levels of evictions in Anne Arundel County.

The County Council recently passed an important new law, the Housing Attainability Act (HAA), that becomes effective in July 2025. The HAA mandates that new residential development projects set aside units for individuals with moderate incomes: Rental projects require a 15% threshold targeting residents who earn up to 75% of the Area Median Income, and sales projects require a 10% threshold targeting buyers earning up to 100% of the Area Median Income. The legislation provides necessary incentives such as fee waivers and density bonuses typically found in moderately priced dwelling unit (MPDU) programs. The HAA does not include a fee-in-lieu option, so developers will be required to build a percentage of affordable units. The legislation is inclusionary: affordable housing units are required in all areas where new developments are happening (over 19 units) and there is public water and sewer, except in Residential Low Density (RLD) and Rural Agricultural (RA) zoning districts.

The HAA also added definitions and allowed missing middle housing types, including triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage courts in the zoning code. ACDS will administer the parts of the bill related to deed restrictions to ensure affordability and management of the waitlist for potential renters and buyers. OPZ and ACDS will develop guidelines for details of implementation over the next few months; they are working with a consultant and learning best practices from other jurisdictions that have already established similar programs.

Jenny Dempsey, the County's Planning and Zoning Officer provided background on the HAA. The Essential Worker Housing Bill was introduced to the County Council in the fall of 2023. When that did not pass, council members, County staff and stakeholders worked during 2024 to reimagine a new bill. The missing middle housing provisions in the bill are an important element to provide more diverse housing types to serve different household sizes, ages, and income levels.

Mrs. Dempsey gave an overview of the Mixed-Use Reform bill that the County Council is currently considering. The need for reform to the current mixed-use zoning districts is identified in Plan2040 and discussed extensively in the Region Plans. In the coming

months, the County Council will also consider a bill to promote redevelopment. A redevelopment bill did not pass when considered in the fall of 2023, and the County is now reimagining that bill and figuring out what requirements need to be made based on feedback on viability from the development community.

Sam Snead, Transportation Officer for the County's Office of Transportation, discussed two bills related to infrastructure that are also being considered: Legislation on road frontage improvement requirements for new development projects is currently with the County Council, and a task force is working on reform legislation on the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance to address multiple modes of transportation, as well as both safety and capacity across those modes.

Mr. Evelyn added that in 2025, the County will also review legislation to update development impact fees, and there is a difficult balance between promoting housing supply through incentives and supporting needed infrastructure.

Committee members asked about the role of appointed boards and commissions in the development and review of legislation. The experience among boards and on different bills has been uneven. Mr. Evelyn said that the Administration is committed to engaging with stakeholders, but they do not always have control of the process and sometimes miss key groups. Mrs. Dempsey said that she understands the challenge and noted that it is hard to put legislation on hold during planning processes.

Mrs. Dempsey provided an update on the status of Region Plans: Regions 2, 4, and 7 are adopted by the County Council; Regions 1, 3, and 9 are drafted and currently under review by the Planning Advisory Board; and, Regions 5, 6, and 8 are underway. The Stakeholder Advisory Committees for Regions 5, 6, and 8 held their kickoff meeting on October 19, 2024.

Mr. Snead described recent improvements to the County's public transit system and reviewed the recommendations of the Transit Development Plan. One of the key recommendations of the draft plan is to expand coverage of on-demand, call-and-ride microtransit zones. These services are currently provided in North County, around Brooklyn Park, and in South County. New zones are proposed to cover the entire County to improve service in underserved areas. The County has built over 290 bus stop signs and launched a real-time bus tracking app. Ridership has increased from 100,000 riders annually before the pandemic to over 300,000 riders; the goal is to have 500,000 riders annually.

Mr. Snead provided an update on the Chesapeake Electric Ferry. A federal grant was awarded to purchase two vessels and fund operations and maintenance to start the service. Mr. Snead provided an overview of efforts to build out the regional trail network and expand connections from neighborhoods and schools to the trail network. Committee members commented that despite funding, construction of trails happens too slowly.

Mr. Snead reviewed the status of major roadway safety and capacity projects across the County. With County upfront investment in design, seven roadway projects are ranked in

the top fifteen projects for the Maryland Department of Transportation. The County established a Vision Zero Dashboard for tracking and taking actions to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities on roadways in the County.

### **Group Discussion**

After the panel presentations, Mr. Stringer asked the group if (1) any important issues were missing in the efforts discussed and (2) to consider if there are ways each person's board can move the needle on these goals. The Committee had these comments:

- One big-picture issue is how to sync all of these efforts, break down silos, and work in coordination. For example, development always seems to come before the infrastructure improvements to support it.
- Increased flexibility can help developers meet public policy objectives in ways that benefit the community. Requirements can result in costly and time-consuming efforts that do not achieve expected outcomes, such as building sections of additional road lanes that lead to traffic weaving and congestion.
- Building permits have declined significantly in the last 20 years; this lack of supply drives the housing affordability problem. Restrictions and more costly impact fees will limit the supply of housing.
- Great work has already been done, such as with school redistricting and reform of the School APF requirements.
- Housing affordability and traffic congestion continue to be two of the top issues in the County, including from the perspective of teachers, school staff, and employees at Fort Meade.

### **Closing and Next Steps**

OPZ will draft a letter that synthesizes the draft recommendations based on what was heard, and send out these letters for Committee members' approval.

*Note: These meeting notes should not be considered as verbatim, but do encapsulate comments made by the Committee, Office of Planning and Zoning staff, and persons who offered comments.*