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Maryland Department of Planning

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Press Release

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Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development in Maryland Formed

Task Force will Study Impacts of Future Growth in Maryland and Serve as Smart Growth Advisory Board

BALTIMORE – The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) today announced the members of the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development.

This Task Force was formed under House Bill 773, signed into law last year. The Task Force is charged with studying a wide range of smart growth and land use issues affecting Maryland and submitting a report of findings and recommendations by December 1, 2008. The term of the Task Force extends beyond this report through 2010, serving as an advisory board to the Governor's Smart Growth Subcabinet. The Task Force will hold its first meeting on January 28, 2008 in Annapolis.

"Maryland is at a crossroads concerning future growth," said Secretary of Planning Richard E. Hall. "We cannot continue to grow the way we have for the past 40 years without dire consequences. The declining health of the Chesapeake Bay, the loss of forests and wetlands and the encroachment of development into out rural lands are signs that we must grow smarter. We must revitalize older communities where infrastructure already exists and growth can flourish. I am confident that the members of the Task Force will work hard to provide balanced solutions to a Maryland that is sustainable and will provide vibrant communities for generations to come," Hall added.

This Task Force originated in House Bill 1141 in the 2006 session to study current land use policies and their impact on growth in the State, as well as the current trends and challenges for municipalities and counties. HB 773 expanded the scope of the Task Force's duties to include, among other tasks, determining the parameters for a State development plan, State transportation plan, and State housing plan and determining how these plans work together with local land use plans. In addition to creating the Task Force, House Bill 1141 also expanded Maryland's planning law by requiring local government to address drinking water, wastewater and water protection issues, annexations and land preservation in their comprehensive plans.

~More~

The 21 members of the Task Force are:

Jon Laria, Task Force Chair, Partner, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP
Vacancy**, House of Delegates Environmental Matters Committee
Delegate Virginia Clagett, House of Delegates Environmental Matters Committee
Senator Allan H. Kittleman, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senator Joan Carter Conway, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Secretary Richard Eberhart Hall, Maryland Department of Planning
Brigid Kenney, Planning Director, Maryland Department of the Environment
Assistant Secretary Caitlin Rayman, Maryland Department of Transportation
Carol Gilbert, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Asuntha Chiang-Smith, Executive Director, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Subcabinet
David Jenkins, Executive Director, Rural Maryland Council
Gerit Knaap, Director, University of Maryland National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education
Commissioner David Carey, Town of Bel Air Board of Town Commissioners
Karl Brendle, Director, City of Laurel Department of Development Management
Sandy Coyman, Director, Worcester County Department of Comprehensive Planning
President Jan Gardner, Frederick County Board of Commissioners
Dru Schmitt-Perkins, Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Maryland
Frank Hersch, Principal, Morris & Ritchie Associates
David Beall, Agricultural Community representative
Derek Berlage, Citizen Representative
Teena Green, Citizen Representative

** The Speaker of the House will appoint a new member from the Environmental Matters Committee on the Task Force. Barry Glassman had been designated as the House of Delegates representative, but was sworn in as a State senator on January 4 to replace Senator J. Robert Hooper, who resigned Dec. 31.

The Task Force will be staffed by MDP.

The Maryland Department of Planning is the State's lead agency for land use planning and smart growth policy. Its mission is to promote "growth that fosters vibrant, livable communities, preserves and protects the environment, and makes efficient use of State resources." MDP reviews the comprehensive, or master, plans of local government for compliance with State planning law. It provides technical assistance to county and municipal planning departments and directs intergovernmental review of federal and State direct development projects for consistency with Maryland's smart growth law. MDP's Office of Smart Growth, which was recreated by Governor Martin O'Malley, provides coordination and outreach for the State's smart growth policies and initiatives. The Department's website is www.mdp.state.md.us.

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~Additional Information~

House Bill 773 empowers the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development to complete the following 13 charges:

- 1) Study current land use policies and their impact on growth in the State;
- 2) Study current trends and challenges for municipal corporations and counties as they relate to growth, including population and demographic changes;
- 3) Analyze the capabilities of municipal corporations and counties to plan for future growth and development;
- 4) Analyze the impacts of county development proximate to municipal corporate limits on municipal infrastructure, water resources, and sensitive areas;
- 5) Analyze the impacts of municipal growth and development on county infrastructure, water resources, and sensitive areas;
- 6) Identify regional growth and development issues;
- 7) Study mechanisms to facilitate joint planning to coordinate growth and development between municipal corporations and counties;
- 8) Examine the impact of § 1.03(e) and § 3.05(f) of Article 66B of the Code on a local government's ability to establish a floating zone on a property or grant piecemeal rezoning of a specific property;
- 9) Determine methods to assess the cumulative impacts of proposed development on infrastructure, including water, sewer, roads, and utilities, and on transportation, fire and safety resources, health systems, educational systems, and environmental resources on a regional scale;
- 10) Determine the parameters for a state development plan, state transportation plan, state housing plan and determine how these plans work together with local land use plans;
- 11) Identify infrastructure needed for smart growth development consistent with population growth;
- 12) Assess mechanisms to fund the construction and maintenance of smart growth infrastructure;
and
- 13) Make recommendations to implement law or regulations that further best management practices as they relate to future growth and development in the State.