



Partnerships for Rural Maryland

The MRDC Small Town Circuit Rider & MD-Rural Community Assistance Project (MD-RCAP)

presented to

Maryland Rural Summit
October 18, 2007

R. Kevin Brooks, Exec. Director, MRDC
Joyce DeLaurentis, MD-RCAP
Cheryl Lewis, MRDC Circuit Rider

MRDC, a resource for Rural Maryland

- MRDC serves as a statewide community development corporation (MD-RCAP) and has been the lead agency for the Rural Community Assistance Project since 1984
- MRDC has been designated as the Community Action Agency serving Cecil, Kent and Caroline Counties, Maryland

Maryland...the wealthiest state per capita in the US (August 2007)

- Where rural communities are rapidly changing,
- Greatest impact upon low wage earning families and communities
 - Poverty has risen from 7.3% in 2001 to 9.8% in 2005
 - 14% of households lack health insurance
 - 10% of Maryland's children live in poverty (24% national avg)
 - Loss of employment base in rural communities
 - Rapid growth in Rural Maryland
 - BRAC impact
 - Housing costs (48% increase in Caroline Co. in 1 yr)
 - Eastern Shore is becoming a commuter base for Baltimore, Washington, Newark and Philadelphia
 - Rising cost of life's basics needs (shelter, energy & the basic's)
 - Environmental concerns and impact of growth

Comprehensive Services to Rural Maryland

Providing resources for local leaders and organizations to address local issues in rural MD

- Town administration
- Comprehensive planning assistance
- Grant writing and project coordination
- Working with communities to vision, plan and implement their strategic direction
- Housing Counseling and Homeownership Services
- Transportation Services
- Asset Development (IDA)
- Local Emergency Preparedness Services
- Child and Family Development (Head Start)
- Financial Literacy and Housing Counseling
- Water and wastewater funding technical assistance
- Leadership and skill base training



MD-Rural Community Assistance Project (MD-RCAP)

Joyce DeLaurentis, Director

Michael Murray, TAP

- MD-RCAP provided direct technical assistance to 43 rural low income communities in 2006.
- Trained over 200 community leaders and elected officials in 2006-07
- **Leveraged \$7,820,363 dollars** in infrastructure improvements on behalf of rural low-income communities in 2006
- Funded through the National RCAP program, with support from the RMC MAERDAF grant



MD-Rural Community Assistance Project (MD-RCAP)

Infrastructure Services

- Funding coordination, preparation of funding requests, preparation for Clearinghouse reviews by State agencies, review of engineering alternatives.

Education

- Seminars, workshops, symposia on topics such as Capital Improvements Planning, Asset Management, Rate Setting, Funding Sources.

Leverage

- **Net leverage over 5 years of \$22,551,059,**
- Primarily grants, of the \$28,252,480 in applications.
- **\$6,518,000 million leveraged in the 2007 to date!!!!.**

Nature of Projects

- Projects range from water supply, treatment and distribution; wastewater collection and treatment upgrades, new plant development for both water and wastewater, correction of failing septic systems and incinerator replacement.

MD-Rural Community Assistance Project (MD-RCAP)

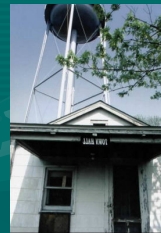
Project Locations in 2007

- Accident
- Hurlock
- Jonestown
- Loch Lynn Heights
- Lonaconing
- Goldsboro
- Henderson
- Marydel
- Mountain Lake Park
- North Caroline County
- Templeville
- Penmar
- Smith Island
- Smithsburg
- Willards
- Williamsport
- Indianhead
- Woolford-Madison (Dorchester County)



MD Small Town Circuit Rider Program Cheryl Lewis, Circuit Rider

- Established as a Demonstration Project in 1981
- Project Sponsors
 - MD Rural Dev. Corp (Dorchester, Queen Anne's, Kent and Caroline Co.)
 - Garrett Co. CAC (Garrett Co. Circuit)
- Requires local matching contributions
 - Participating towns or
 - County financial support
 - Sponsor support direct and in-kind



MD Small Town Circuit Rider Program provides professional management to 12 rural towns on the Eastern Shore and 7 towns in Garrett County

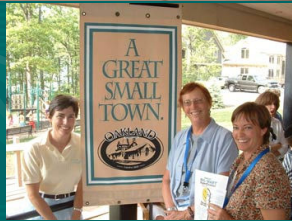
Eastern Shore

*Goldsboro
Marydel
Henderson
Brookview
Church Creek
Galestown
Elklorado
Betterton
Millington
Snulersville
Barclay
Templeville*



Garrett County

*Accident
Friendsville
Loch Lynn
Mountain Lake Park
Kitzmiller
Grantsville
Deer Park*



Circuit Rider Services to Rural Maryland

- Municipal Administration;
 - prepare draft public notice, municipal ordinances, charter amendments and budgets.
 - Act as liaison with other municipal staff, County, State, and Federal government representatives.
 - Supervises other town employees when authorized.
 - Meetings; attends council meetings including all special meetings, various planning commissions and zoning appeal boards.

Circuit Rider Services to Rural Maryland

- Grant Preparation/ Administration;
 - prepares grant applications for Federal and State grant programs.
 - Administers approved grant projects.
- Communication and Information;
 - Analyzes specific problems and provides appropriate advice to town staff and to elected officials.
 - Maintains familiarity with Federal and State program laws and regulation, and issues and problems in Maryland municipal governments.
 - Be knowledgeable re: trends and policies in municipal finance, human resources management, general management and public administration.

In the words of local leaders....

- “The Circuit Rider is the heart that beats our town and the blood that flows through our town.”
- “They are certainly not in the job for the money.”
- “Without Circuit Riders, we would not be towns, just gas stations on the way to Delaware.”
- “Our Circuit Rider is Andy Griffith to all our Mayberry's.”

Debbie Rowe, Commissioner
Town of Maryland

Real answers to real problems....

“When you have a question, they can get you an answer.”
“They have the knowledge that is needed to do what is right.”

“They never give up on us and always stick with us.”
“They bring big town knowledge to our small towns.”

Sandy Cook, Mayor
Town of Henderson



Partners in Community Building...

- *Maryland Rural Council*
- *U.S Dept. of Agriculture, Rural Development*
- *MD Dept of Housing and Community Development*
- *Rural Maryland Foundation*
- Annie Casey Foundation
- U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
- US Housing and Urban Development
- SE-Rural Community Assistance Project (SE-RCAP)
- The Chaney Foundation
- Rural Community Assistance Partnership
- Commissioners of Cecil County
- Commissioners of Caroline County
- Commissioners of Dorchester County
- Commissioners of Garrett County
- Chesapeake Section of American Water Works
- Environmental Finance Center. Univ. of Maryland
- Maryland Rural Water Assn.
- Universities and Community Colleges

And since we are planners....

- We have to throw in some data to make it really official.....

Projected Population Growth by Maryland Region

Region	Projected Population Growth, 2005-2025
Southern Maryland	30.9%
Upper Eastern Shore	19.0%
Suburban Washington	16.1%
Lower Eastern Shore	14.6%
Baltimore Region	8.5%
Western Maryland	6.9%

Source: Maryland State Data Center

Upper Eastern Counties: Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot and Caroline
Lower Eastern Counties: Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester

Most recent census #'s for the 20 smallest towns – 9 are currently in the Small Town CR program

- *East New Market*
- *Goldsboro*
- Barnesville
- Burkittsville
- Queen Annes
- Hillsboro
- *Barclay*
- *Marydel*
- Brookeville
- *Henderson*
- Highland
- Highland Beach
- *Galestown*
- *Church Creek*
- *Templeville*
- Luke
- *Brookview*
- *Eldorado*
- Eagle Harbor
- Port Tobacco



Funding.....

- State General Funds have been at static levels (\$120,000) since 2001, when not threatened to be cut or eliminated
- Current pressure on spending reductions
- Services have been maintained in tight budget years despite increasing costs through greater local support
- Leverages beyond 1-1 in local resources/local match
- Strong local support for the program
- National model potential
- A smart investment in Smart Growth

Opportunities

- Support the successful cross program partnership to strengthen the support and expand the resources available to Circuit Riders (Rural Prosperity Initiative)
- Co-training resources MRDC Small Town Symposium and the Rural Summit reach the same audiences. Western Maryland Spring 2008
- Additional resources for new circuits statewide to help meet the needs of small rural towns facing challenges.
- As per the program evaluation performed in 2001 by DHCD there were approx 64 eligible jurisdictions for Circuit Rider assistance....
- 6 years later we are roughly serving 1/3 of the need
- Fund the Program!!!!

Thank you



MRDC/ MD-RCAP

P.O. Box 4848

Annapolis, MD 21403

410 269-0910

rkb@mrdc.net

www.mrdc.net