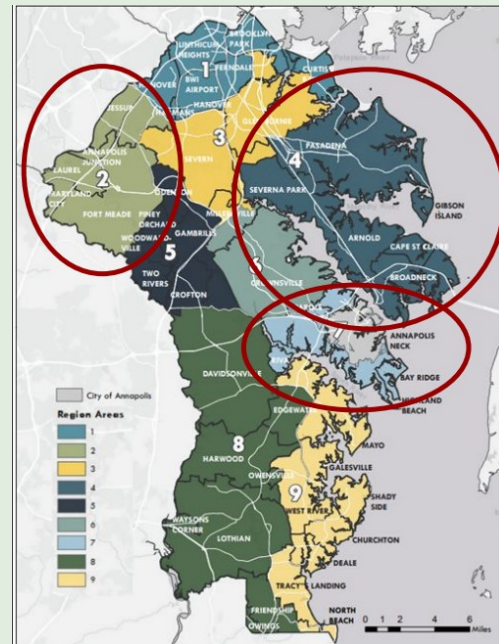




Region Plan Strategies survey now underway

The Regional Planning Committees for Regions 2, 4, and 7 shown in the map are soliciting feedback through surveys on their draft strategies for the plans in each region.



The Committees have evaluated community assets and needs, and drafted strategies to achieve a shared vision for the next 20 years. Focus is upon:

- Planned land use
- Zoning
- Environmental protection
- Transportation improvements
- Public facilities
- Community design

The Region Plans will ultimately be used as a reference for informing future requests that **directly affect your neighborhood** in areas such as modifying zoning, private development plans, and the capital budget and improvement program. They are an opportunity for you to shape your community.

There are 5 survey topics for each region:

- Natural Environment
- Built Environment - Housing
- Built Environment - Transportation
- Built Environment - Land Use
- Healthy Communities/Healthy Economy.

The questionnaires close on April 3, 2023. The surveys can be accessed at the Region Plan Website.

[Visit Region Plan Website](#)

Council Bill 6-23 Accessory Dwelling Units



Bill 6-23 authorizes the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADU's) of 800 sq. ft. or less to augment single family homes on lots zoned RA up to R15. The bill has four co-sponsors and substantial public support. Several amendments were offered in the March 6 meeting it and seems destined to pass at the April 3 meeting if additional amendments are introduced on March 20.

GAN sees this bill as but one of the many solutions needed to address the shortage of affordable housing in AACo. It would allow families to build small buildings up to 800 square feet for aging parents or other family members This bill also allows owners to rent both units for longer term lease.

GAN supported several amendments to the bill, which allow owners to rent one of the two buildings for short term rentals only if the other is owner occupied, prevent variances to be granted to the minimum lot setback requirements in order to protect neighbors, and provide that ADU's are not included in the new construction of a principal family dwelling.

Additional amendments are needed, including requirements that:

- There should be no exemption from the Critical Area regulations for an ADU.
- Separate structures containing ADUs should not be allowed on historic properties.
- Only a homeowner may construct an ADU in a separate structure – to eliminate issues regarding impact fees if developers are allowed to construct an ADU at the same time as a primary dwelling.
- ADUs in separate structures should require a special exception to allow neighbors to have input into the character of their neighborhood.
- ADUs should not be allowed in certain types of developments, including those developed using cluster criteria, or townhouse developments in R-2 through R-15 districts to protect homeowners and stormwater management systems.

In spite of apparent general support, Bill 6-23 is not without controversy. Compatibility with Plan 2040 and Smart Growth concepts has not been discussed, and HOA responsibilities, and community layouts like clustering have not been addressed. Amendments requiring parking considerations have also been defeated. Disagreements between neighbors seem likely to multiply.

A primary concern about this bill, though, is its sheer scope. GIS analysis of parcel data in the County shows that more than 100,000 parcels are subject to the bill, and its

potential impact is large. As written, it authorizes substantial increases in population density in suburban areas and the sheer number of subject parcels suggests that the likelihood of unintended consequences is high. It seems unlikely that anyone wants to see 100,000 ADU's constructed, and the obvious question is "why should that be authorized?" We suggest an amendment either limiting the total number of ADU building permits to 1,000 or imposing a sunset date of 5 years so that the impact of ADUs on neighborhoods as well as any unintended consequences can be assessed. This would allow citizens to see and quantify the actual impact of ADU's before scaling up the program.

ADU's can serve some unmet housing needs, and the impact of Bill 6-23 will be difficult to assess in the short term. [GAN encourages its members to consider the bill carefully, contact your Council representatives, and submit written or oral testimony at coming Council meetings.](#)

[GAN Meetings with Councilmember Pete Smith and Julie Hummer](#)

On February 15 the GAN Board met virtually with Councilman Smith . Topics of discussion included an overview of his perspective on growth and development, approaches to redevelopment, EV charging at new gas stations, and hybrid Council meetings.

On February 28 the GAN Board met virtually with Councilwoman Hummer . Topics of discussion included an overview of her legislative priorities, zombie permits, hybrid council meetings, perspective on growth and development, approaches to redevelopment, EV charging at new gas stations, hybrid Council meetings, and Ft. Meade housing needs.

All GAN members were invited to observe the meetings and submit questions through the chat function. Meeting minutes will be distributed to all members.

[GAN Dues](#)

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