

Advocacy opportunities for the new GDP

Paul Christensen

Tracys Landing

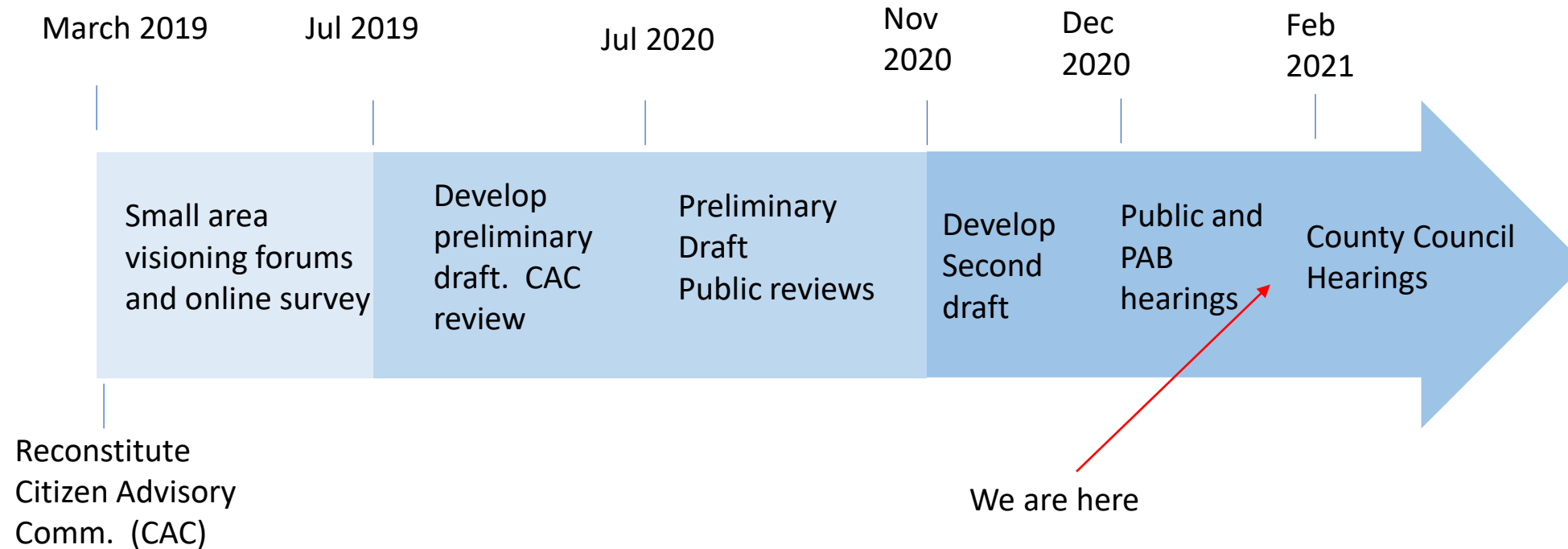
cpclaser@gmail.com

What is the General Development Plan?

- Comprehensive, 20-year guide to
 - land use
 - utilization of assets
 - conservation of resources
- Expresses citizens' vision of the future
- Complies with State requirements and guidelines
- Revised every 10 years
- All development regulations adopted by County must be consistent with GDP

It's a big deal!

Plan2040 Process and Timeline

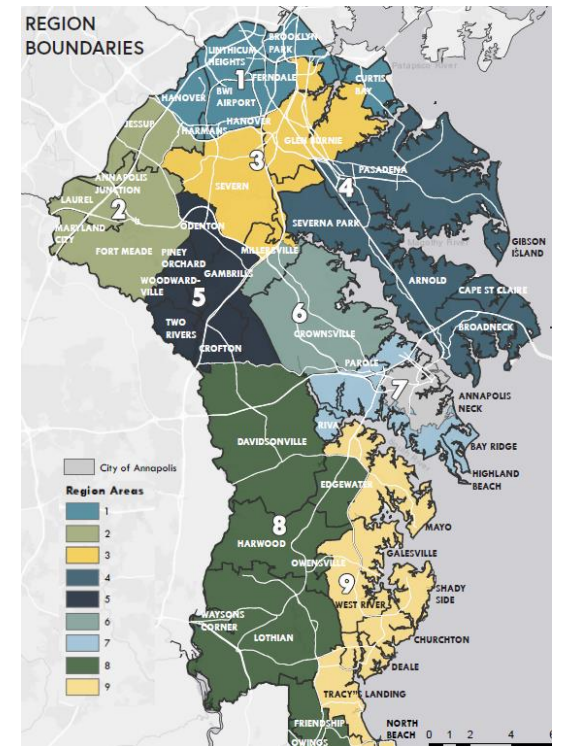
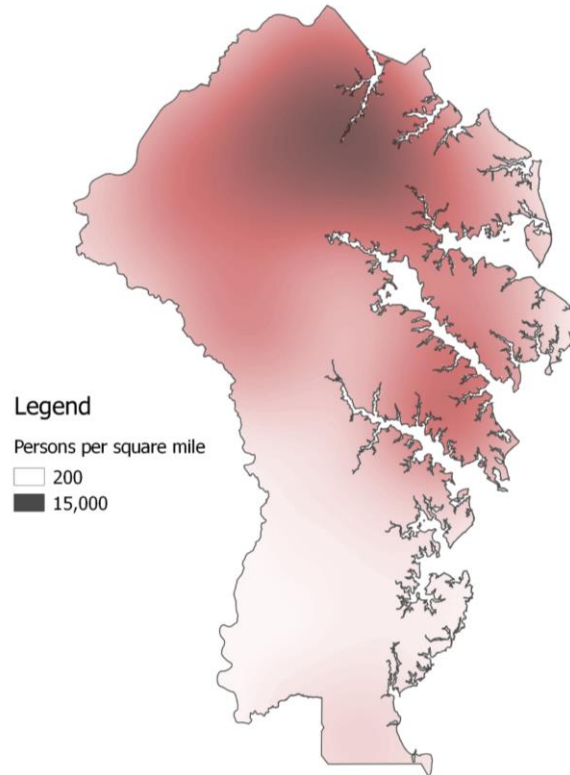
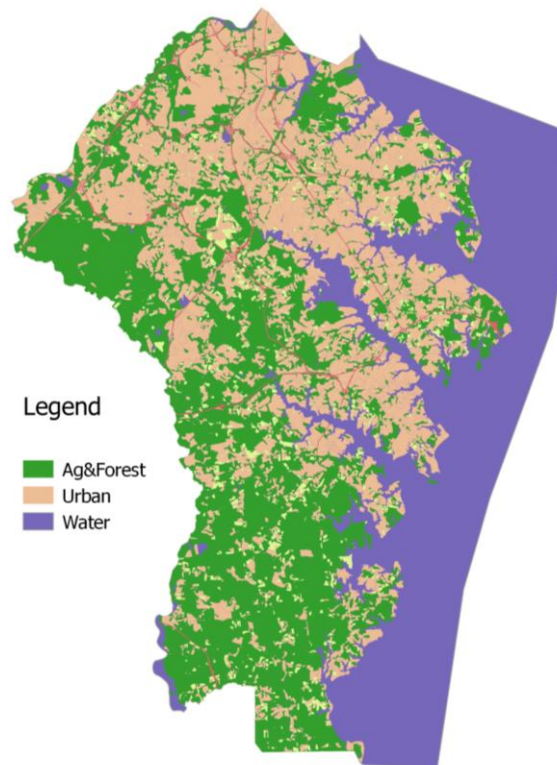


More information and drafts of Plan2040 –

<http://www.aacounty.org/departments/planning-and-zoning/long-range-planning/>

Plan2040 will be followed by Regional Area Planning

Regional Area Plans allow recognition of the Geographic, Demographic, and Land Use Diversity of Anne Arundel County

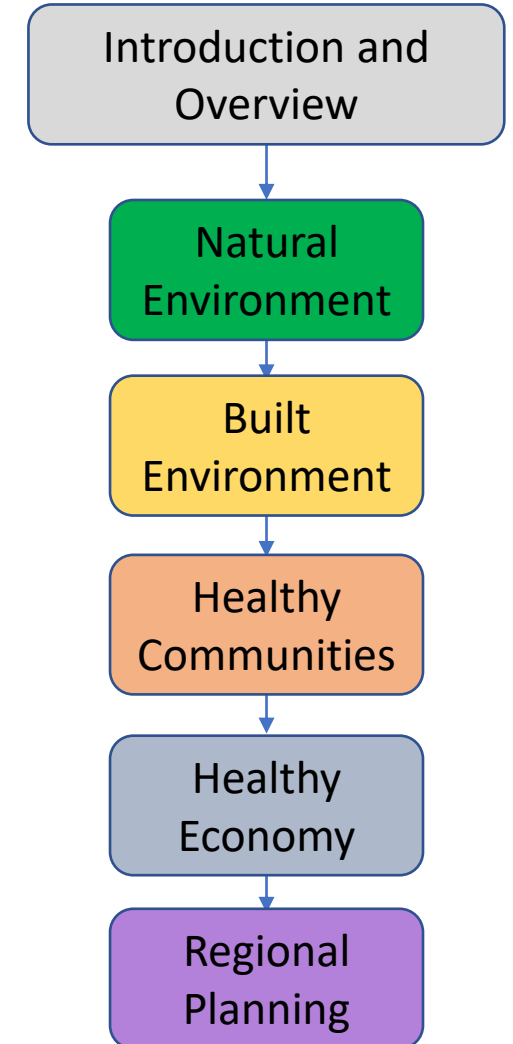


Satellite View of Plan2040

- Pros
 - Plan2040 contains numerous desirable policies
 - Environmental protection
 - Support of redevelopment
 - Keeping South County rural
- Cons
 - Weak growth management approach
 - Focus on where to put growth predicted by market projections
 - Little consideration given to current residents' desires
 - No policies or strategies for limiting growth rates or halting excessive development
 - No strategy for workforce housing
 - Spending economic development resources in West County
- Missing or limited
 - Climate change impacts on natural environment and developable land
 - Potential impact of another Bay Bridge
 - Single use plastics and trash
 - Impact of development on water quality

Plan2040 organization

- Plan2040 is a guide, not a plan
 - County-wide guide for Regional Area Planning and future legislation
 - Sets out Goals, Policies, and Strategies
 - Specifies land use, through Land Use Map
 - 5 main sections
 - Two volumes
 - Vol 1: Plan (71 pages)
 - Vol 2: Background and supporting information (287 pages)



Environmental Protection

- Plan2040 section on Natural Environment had large contributions from Citizen Environmental Commission
- Desirable goals
 - Goal NE1: Preserve, Enhance, and Restore sensitive areas
 - Goal NE2: Retain/increase forest cover
 - Goal NE3: Expand/protect Greenways, natural habitat and rural land
- Missing or minimal treatment
 - Climate change issues
 - Single use plastics and trash
 - Impact of development on water quality
 - e.g., Patuxent River in West County



Greenways/Green Infrastructure

- Greenways are large, connected areas of prime forest
- Greenways provide valuable environmental services
 - Stormwater retention, carbon sequestration, etc.
 - Total value is estimated by MdDNR to be more than \$54 million/year
- Updated Greenway Master Plan coming soon
- Language in GDP can influence coming legislation
- Opportunity for improving protection of Greenways
 - No net loss of trees
 - Prohibit or highly restrict development
 - High fee in lieu of tree replacement



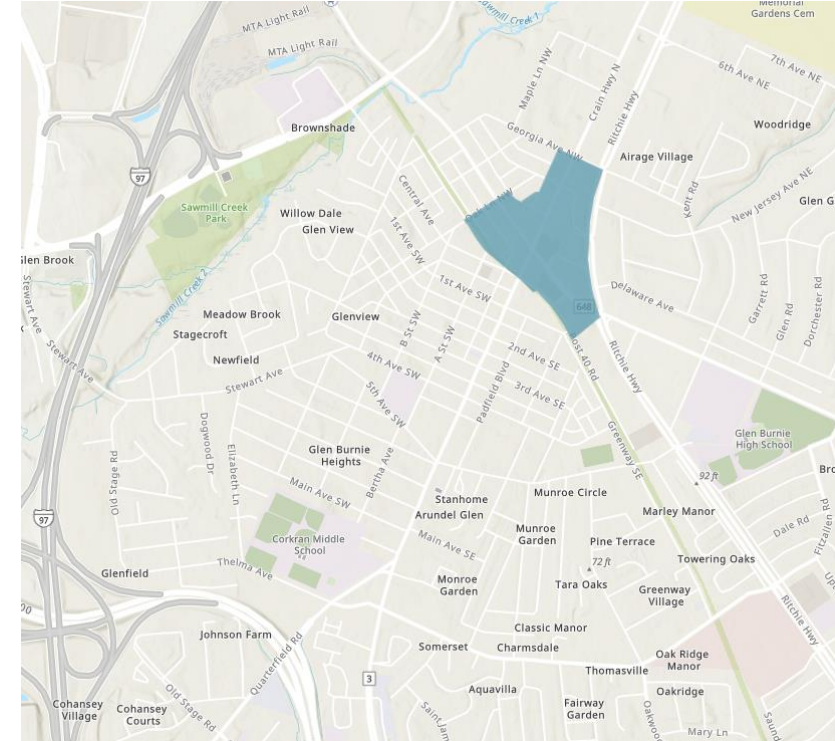
Agricultural Preservation

- 1993 goal of 20,000 acres of woodlands and agriculture land preservation
 - Still only 13,961 preserved in 2020
 - RA zoning is not protection
 - Ag tourism is not a broad solution
 - Only vague references in the Plan to expanded protection
- Economic drivers for Ag land development
 - Aging farmers
 - Low profit margins on farm products
 - Market consolidation and transportation changes
- Need to give farmers a route other than subdivision to monetization of their land
- Need to assure budgeted funds for County purchase conservation easements
 - \$5M/yr = 0.3% of annual budget would have huge impact



Built environment beneficial policies

- Redevelopment/revitalization at Targeted Growth Areas include opportunities
 - Glen Burnie
 - Brooklyn Park
- Continuing emphasis on preservation of rural characteristic of South County
- Recommended land use changes consider nature of surrounding areas

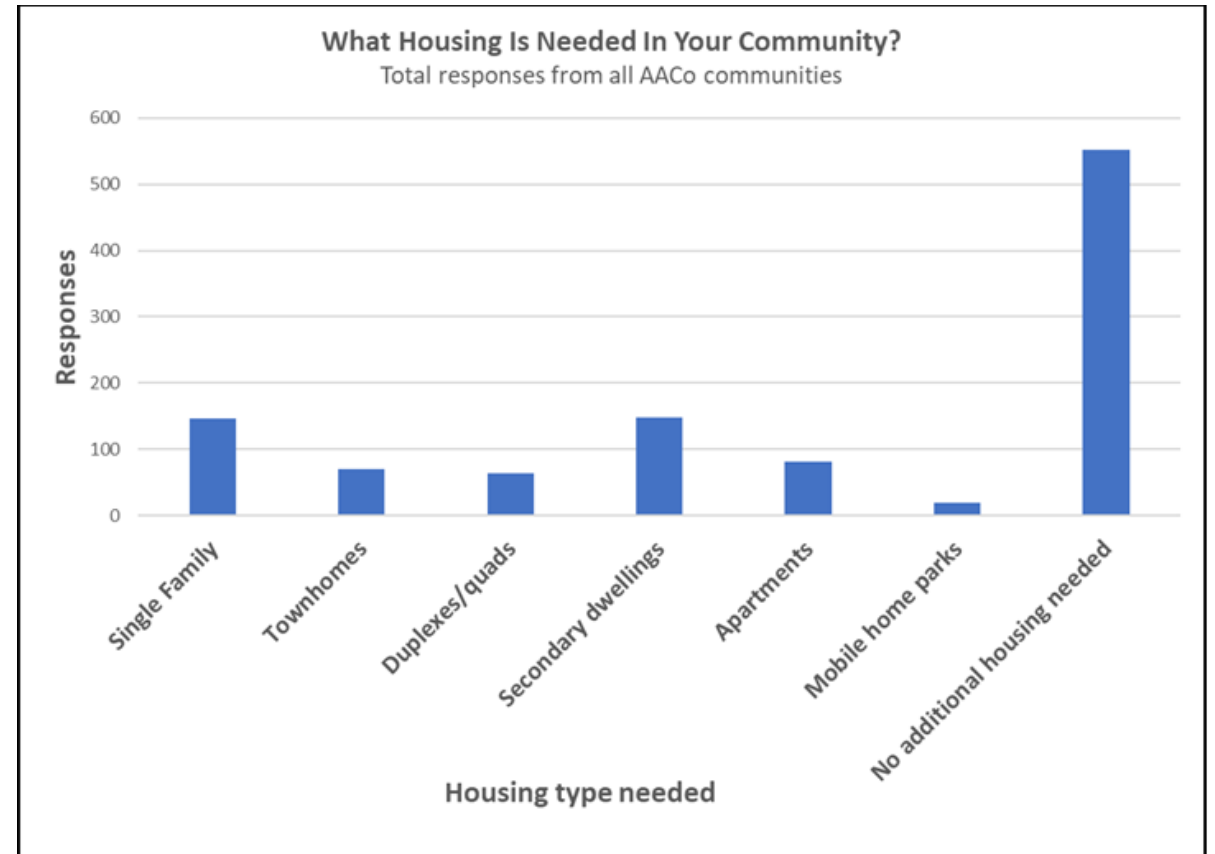


Population Growth in AACo

- Current growth rate < 1%/year, but...
- Majority of current residents want slower or no growth
 - GDP Listening Sessions
 - GDP Survey
 - Plan2040 comments
 - CE election platform

“Citizens typically do not want to see increased population density in their own community.”

(Phil Hager, Head, AA Planning and Zoning)

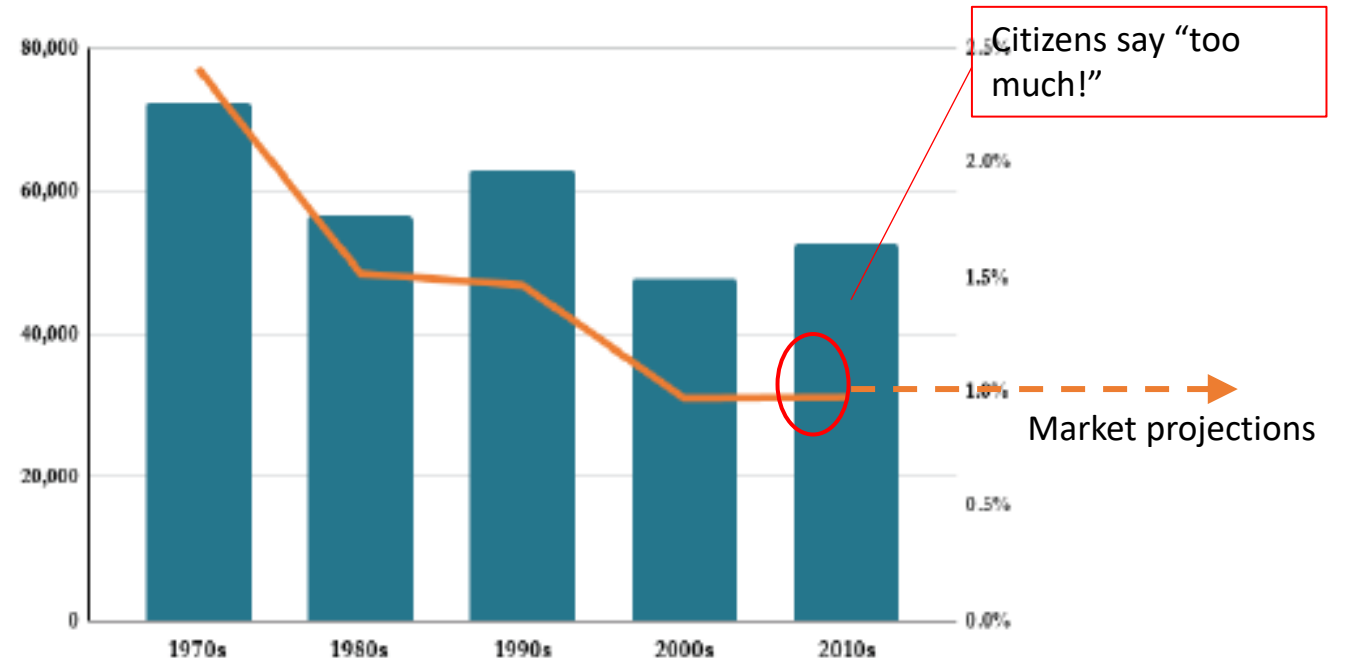


Source: 2019 GDP Visioning Survey

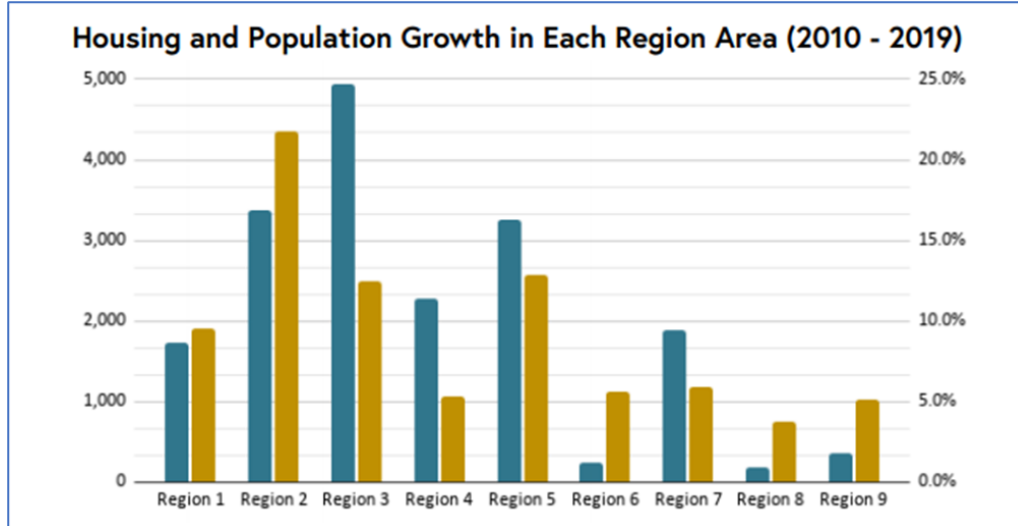
Plan2040 states:

- Current growth rate is acceptable!!
- Growth rate regulation is not needed??

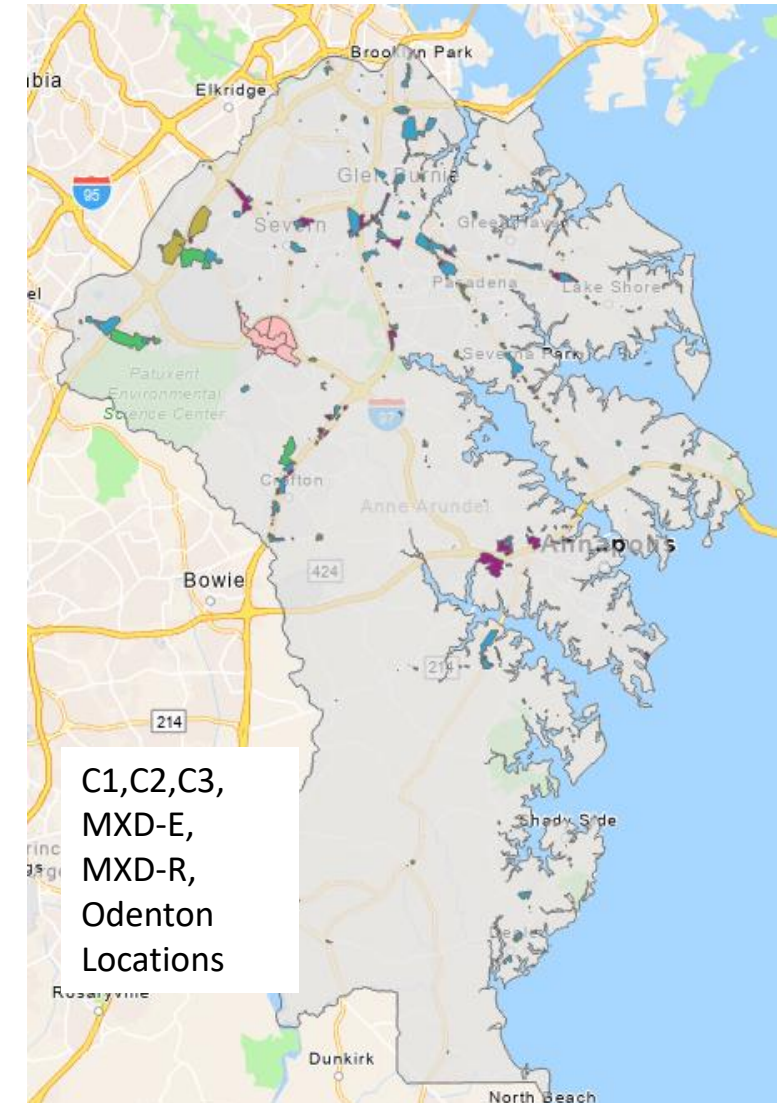
Change in Population Per Decade
and Average Annual Growth Rate



“Smart???” Growth



- Most of the excess growth would go to West and North County
- Some areas already have excessive growth
- Many residents object to current growth rates



WHY?

- Why accept and plan for excessive growth???
 - Minimal benefit for current residents
- Ultimately must achieve stable population
 - Continuous population growth is not sustainable.
 - Resource, space limits, environmental damage
- Need for growth limits with regional control
 - Needs vary with location
 - Development rate
 - Development types
 - Redevelopment vs. greenfield
 - Needs vary with time
 - Empower Regional Plans?

Changes in land use

- Up-zoning to commercial and mixed use is slated for parts of West and North County
 - Many current residents object
- Proposed encouragement of development in Ft. Meade and BWI areas
 - Redirect to Baltimore? (Suggestion by CE)
- Solar sites
 - Developers prefer greenfield vs brownfield or power line right-of-way development
 - Easier, more profitable
 - Limited treatment of this problem in the Plan.



Unaddressed External threats

- Third Bay Bridge
 - Broadneck, Mayo, or Pasadena
 - Restrict development on access roads?
- Climate change
 - Restrict development in areas vulnerable to flooding?
 - Consider wetland migration?



Aspirational goals for community services

- Provide high-quality services
 - Schools,
 - Libraries
 - Public recreation
 - Seniors
- Eliminate inequities in service provision

Beneficial Policies

- Promote economic development to support Covid-19 recovery
 - *Don't destroy environment to try to improve economy*
- Promote development and redevelopment in targeted areas
 - Incentives
 - Marketing programs
 - Redevelopment Authority for facilitating redevelopment/revitalization
 - Redevelopment of brownfields
- Agriculture economic development
 - New industries and uses
 - Marketing assistance
 - Youth ag programs

Questionable Economic Policies

- Promote development in support of Ft. Meade
 - Ft. Meade growth is already driving excessive local residential development
 - Ongoing expansion will fuel growth drive
 - Likely to create only specialized white-collar jobs
 - AACo resources better spent on promotion of redevelopment/revitalization
- Promote development near BWI airport
 - Not a good location for residential development
 - Need to assure that commercial development will produce jobs for current residents

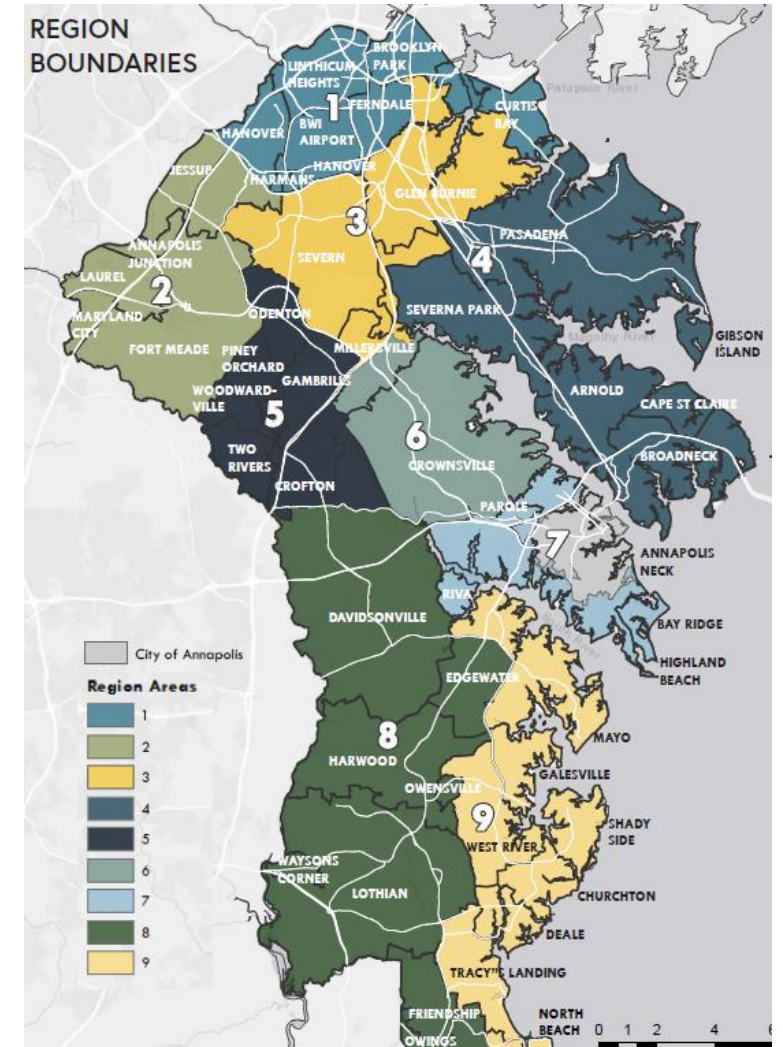
Plan2040 will be followed by Regional Area Planning

- Plan2040 is a guide for RAP's and legislation
 - RAP's must be consistent with Plan2040
 - RAP's will determine zoning, guided by Land USE Map in Plan 2040
- 9 RAP's will be done, 3 at a time
 - Each RAP will require about 1.5 years
 - The most active Regions will be done first (2,3,4 ?)
 - Least active last (6, 8, 9?)



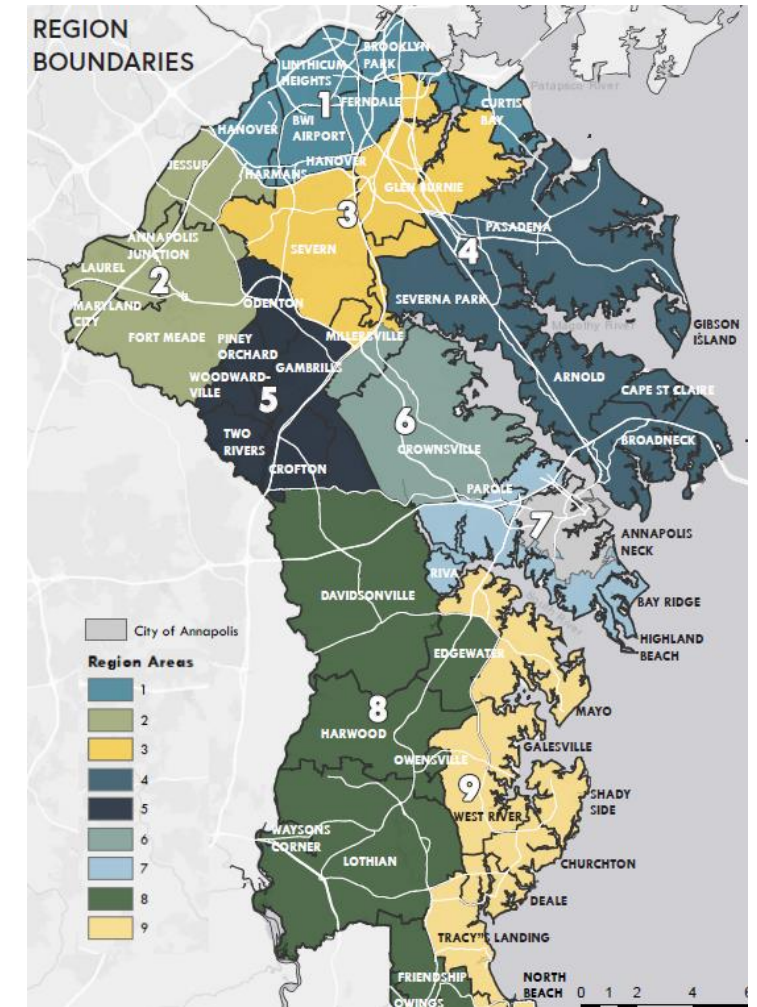
Regional Area Plan content

- Similar to Plan2040
 - Natural Env., Built Env., ...etc.)
- Opportunity for local citizen input
 - Refine Land Use Plan
 - Identify local issues
- Identify action strategies to address local challenges
- Everything must be consistent with Plan2040



Regional Planning Committees

- Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SAC) will do regional plans
 - Composition will have large impact on plan output
 - CE will appoint committees –
 - Influence composition by suggesting good people
 - At least one person from each community within region
- At least 9 members
 - The age, gender, racial, and ethnic composition of the Committees should reflect the demographics of the Region
- Plan2040 suggests strong commercial representation:
 - Long-time resident (over 20 years)
 - Recent resident (less than 10 years)
 - Local business representative
 - Home builder/ real estate developer
 - Environmental organization
 - Community/ social organization
 - Renter
 - Real Estate broker
 - Youth or young adult representative
- AACo has more than 10 times as many employees as businesses



Advocacy opportunities for Plan2040



February 1, 2021
Draft plan submitted to County Council

Start advocacy to Council Members!

- Telephone and email
- Copy all other Council Members on email

Contact details at Council webpage:

<https://www.aacounty.org/departments/county-council/index.html>

March 2021 (dates to be announced)
Hearings before the County Council

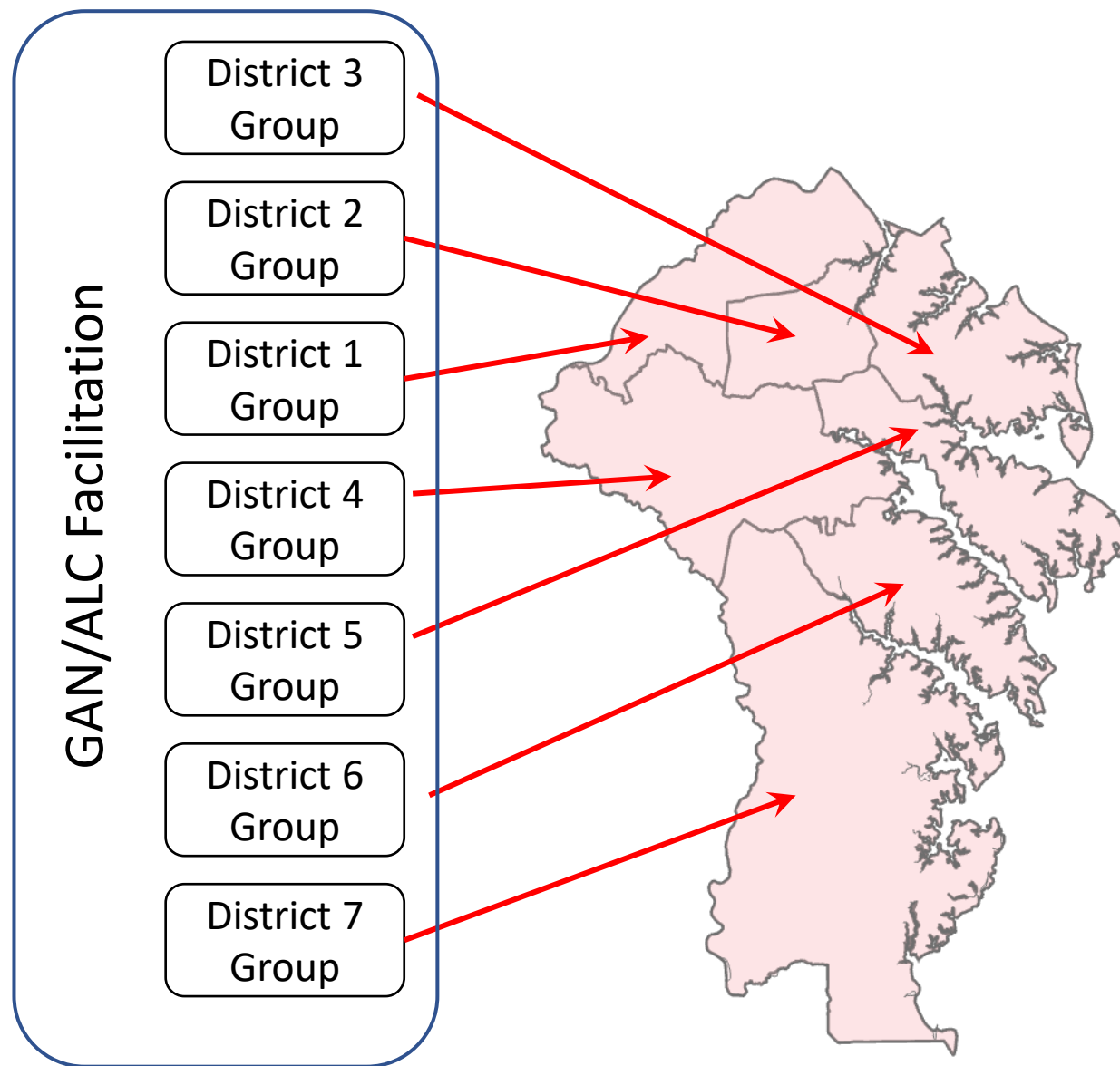
Council must vote by bill expiration date: May 3

Ongoing...

Meetings of GAN/ALC District Groups for Plan2040 advocacy
Discussion of issues for presentation to County Council representatives.

GAN/ALC Plan2040 Advocacy

- Small groups for each Council District
- General Virtual meetings of groups to discuss issues
- Each group advocates to their Councilmember



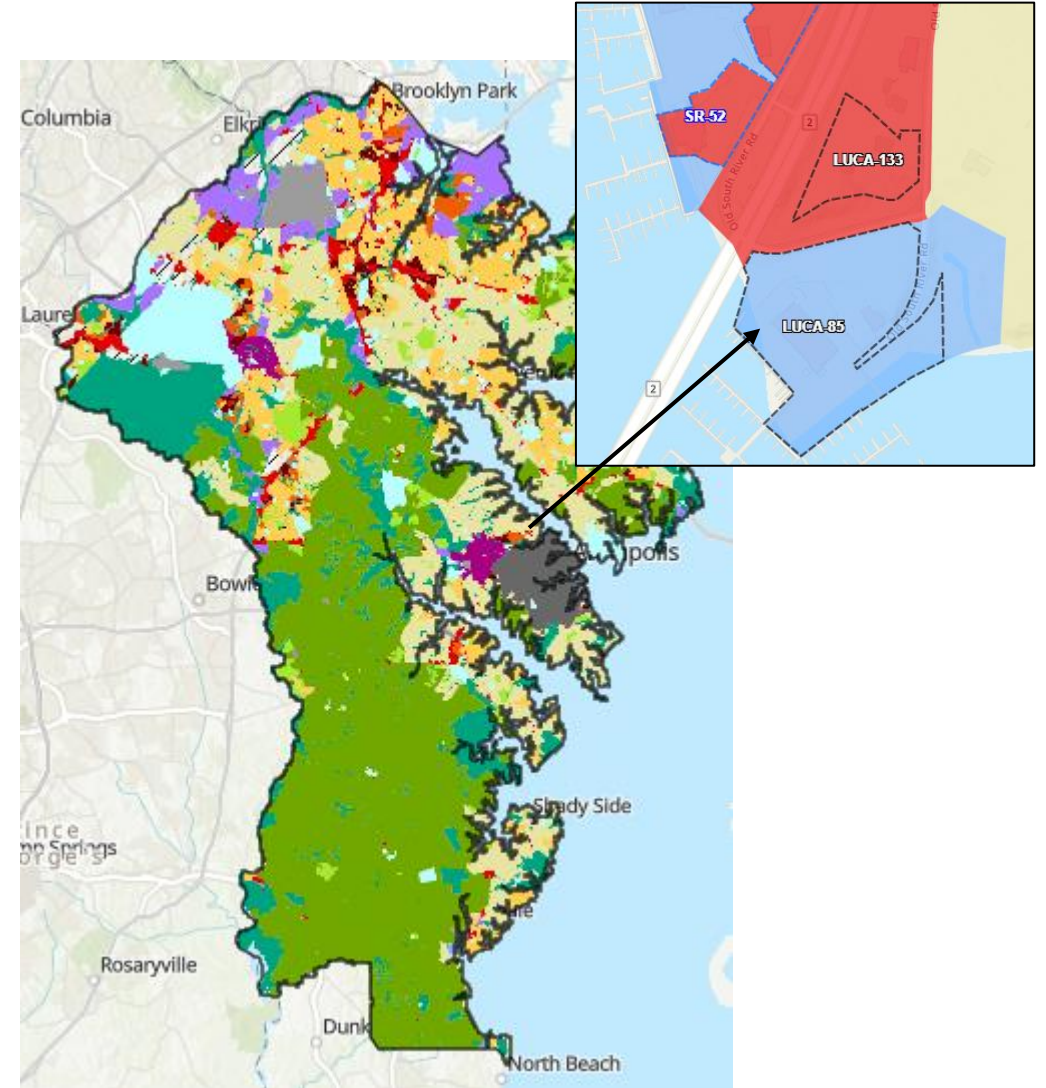
Countywide Advocacy Issues

- Support of Natural Environment policies
 - Goal NE1: Preserve, Enhance, and Restore sensitive areas
 - Goal NE2: Retain/increase forest cover
 - Goal NE3: Expand/protect Greenways and rural land
- Add Goal of bringing growth in line with citizen desires
 - Need local control over rate and type
 - Remove arguments against growth limits (vol 1, p. 34)
- Support redevelopment in targeted areas
- Support preservation and strengthening of Historic Communities
- Discourage further development in traffic congested areas
- Improve workforce housing plan
 - Locations
 - Assure benefit to AACo workforce
- Invest economic development funds in projects that bring jobs to current residents
 - Why Ft. Meade and BWI?
- Interim zoning
 - Need policy on rezoning before completion of Regional Plans

Review Local Land Use Changes

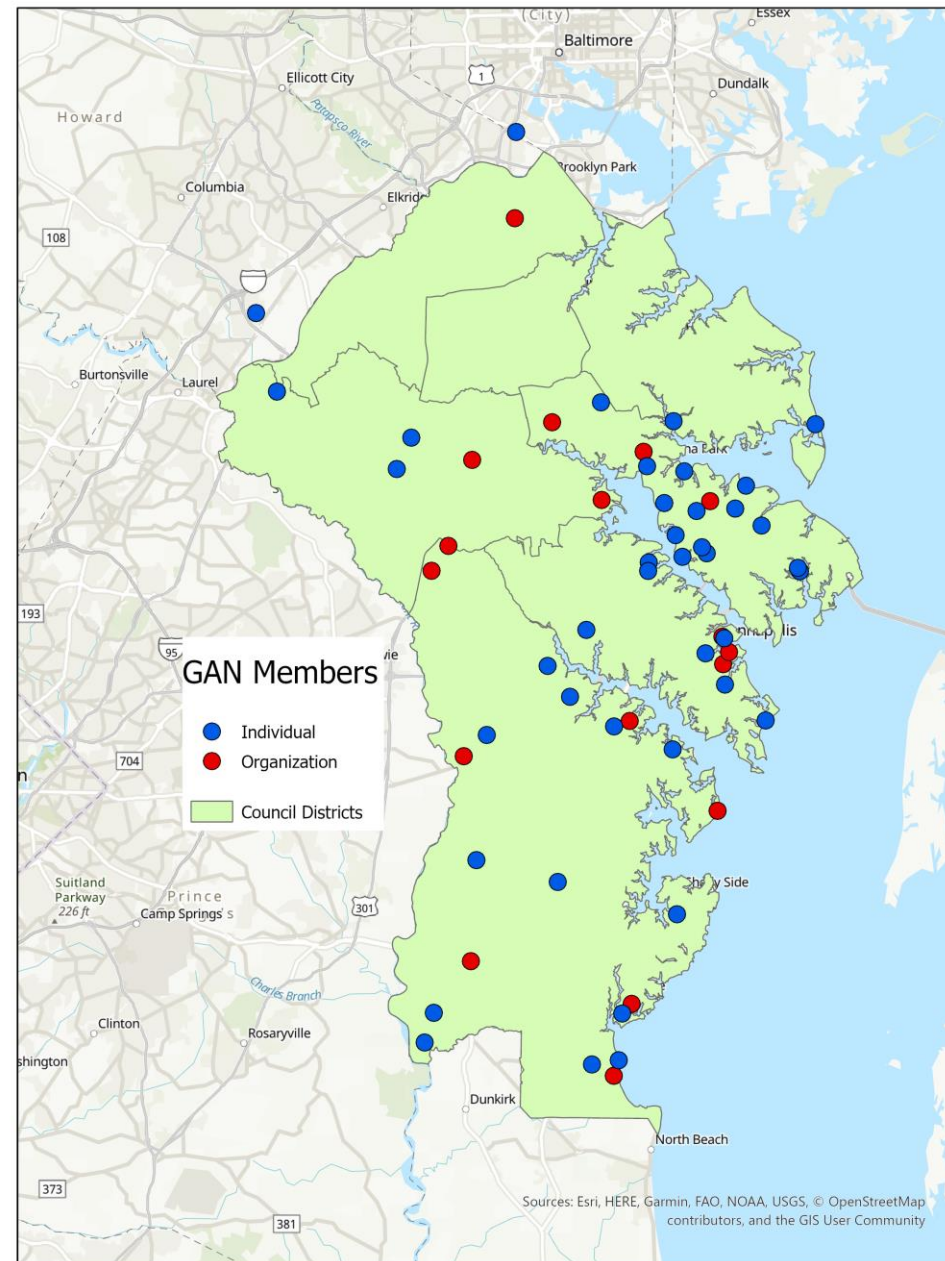
Proposed Land Use Map

- Strong impact on future rezoning
- Land Use Change Applications (LUCA) requested by property owners and Staff Recommendations (SR)
- Follow changes requested in your area
- Land use attorneys and developers are expected to lobby strongly on land use changes



Advocate!

- Find the issues of interest to you
- Team with others of like interest
- Use the GAN network
 - On local issues GAN will facilitate
 - On County-wide issues GAN will participate directly
- **Contact your Council Representative**





Growth Action Network

of Anne Arundel County, Inc.

P.O. Box 748 • Arnold, MD 21012 • www.growthaction.net

Thank you!