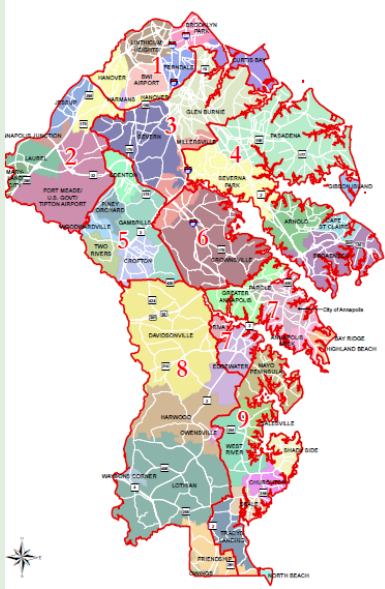




Growth Action Network

of Anne Arundel County, Inc.

P.O. Box 748 • Arnold, MD 21012



County Council continues review of Plan 2040

March 25, 2021

Nine amendments introduced at March 15 meeting

About one half of the three-month period available to the County Council for evaluation of Plan2040 has elapsed.

Nine amendments were introduced at the March 15 Council meeting.

Amendments:

1. Changes targeted start date of second round of Regional Plans to Dec 2022
2. Changes order of Regional Planning to 2,3,7; followed by 1,3,9; followed by 5,6,8
3. Clarifies that listed land uses on Table 17 of Vol. II are “Anticipated” but not necessarily “Permitted”
4. Adds language to include certain types of trails in the Southern part of the County to a Comprehensive Countywide Trails Plan
5. Adjusts Land Use Classification for application PDR-3.
6. Adds a paragraph describing the “Sustainable Community Action Plans” to the Commercial Revitalization section
7. Includes an a more detailed explanation of how implementation of Plan2040 will occur, including the role of the County Council
8. Adds “development of a comprehensive resource guide” to an implementation strategy for increasing opportunities for business innovation
9. Adds Critical Corridors along certain areas of Veterans Highway and Hospital Drive to “Development Policy Areas” maps

Lack of cost estimates or priorities in Plan2040 is highlighted

In its March 11 Work Session the Council attempted to explore the staff time and cost that might be associated with implementation of Plan2040. OPZ declined to make even a rough estimate of necessary administrative staff time and associated cost, citing

complexity of the plan and uncertainty of strategies. OPZ head, Steven Kaii-Ziegler, also stated that involvement of the public in portions of the process would likely increase the associated staff time and costs by factors of 3 or 4. A video clip of this portion of the March 11 Work Session can be viewed at [this link](#).

Lack of priorities, costs and timelines, makes clear the fact that Plan2040 is not a plan, but, rather, is a guide for future legislation and administrative activities in the County. It also appears likely that there may be tradeoffs among budget, schedule, and future public involvement.

Regional Plan issues receive increased attention

1. A start date order has been proposed by amendment 2 (above) to Plan2040
2. Further clarification is needed for the use of the Land Use Map by the Regional Plans. This discussion seems still to be evolving. Zoning carried out by the Regional Plans is required to be consistent with the Land Use Map, but the Regional Plans will be able to request changes to the Land Use Map. This opens the question of whether the Land Use Map serves a purpose beyond being just a summary of land use recommendations by OPZ.
3. There is little agreement on the pace and type of growth desired by current residents in the various Regions of the County. This is an issue that influences many land use decisions and needs to be clearly resolved. As part of their planning process, the Regional Plans should be directed to gather information on these important issues. make recommendations on these important issues.

Bill 20-21, Forest Protection

The purpose of this Bill is to require property owners to obtain approval from the County for clearing more than three trees or more than 2,500 square feet in a forest, if the forest is considered a priority retention area. The Bill makes clearing in violation of the new legislation a Class A civil offense and provides that the fine shall be \$4.50 per square foot of trees or area cleared, not to exceed \$10,000 per violation.

This bill is intended to close a loophole in Bill 68-19 that allowed clearing in priority forests before subdivision applications were filed. The GAN Board suggests that the maximum fine in 20-21 is much too small to deter developers of most larger subdivisions.

Coming meetings and events

- April 1, 6 pm -- Special County Council work-session on Plan2040 (virtual)
- April 5, 6 pm – County Council meeting (virtual). Plan2040 open for public comment
- April 13, 9 am -- County Council work session (virtual)
- April 14, 10 am -- GAN Board Meeting (virtual)

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