

Interim Report of the Concentrating Growth Workgroup

November 14, 2011

We sought to answer 2 questions

1. How do we persuade more people and businesses to choose existing communities when they choose where they will live, work and invest?
2. Can we encourage development in places that are targeted for growth and revitalization by streamlining the development approval process in those locations?



Competitive Advantage



Provide Infrastructure

- Create a Maryland Targeted Communities Infrastructure Fund
- Enhance DHCD's existing Local Government Infrastructure Financing (LGIF) program
- Incentivize local governments to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF)



Incentivize Private Investment

Annual funding of three existing programs at higher levels:

1. Community Legacy = \$5 million
2. Neighborhood Business Works = \$5 million
3. Sustainable Communities Tax Credit
= \$10 million

Incentivize Private Investment

4. Reduce impact taxes, permit and review fees in sustainable locations
5. Exercise maximum flexibility on stormwater in sustainable locations



Cultivate Community-Based Organizations

- Create and fund more Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI)
- Allocate \$2.5 million of the Sustainable Communities Tax Credit to CDFIs, Community Development Corps. (CDCs), and other non-profits



Streamline Project Approvals

1. Each jurisdiction should consider a streamlining program
2. Focus on critical economic development, revitalization and mixed use projects
3. Reduce delay by eliminating steps and reviewing in parallel with State agencies

4. Consult with development and environmental communities when designing program
5. Do not impose new regulations unless they are necessary to advance other public policies that are *more* important than concentrating growth



Streamlining “best practices”

- Well-defined program with enough staff
- Managed by an official with clout
- Line employees are trained and motivated
- Agency culture of customer service, without sacrificing the public interest

Streamlining “best practices”

- “Front load” reviews and decisions
- Front load public participation
- Pre-submittal meetings
- Consider replacing special exceptions and conditional uses with by-right reviews







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