

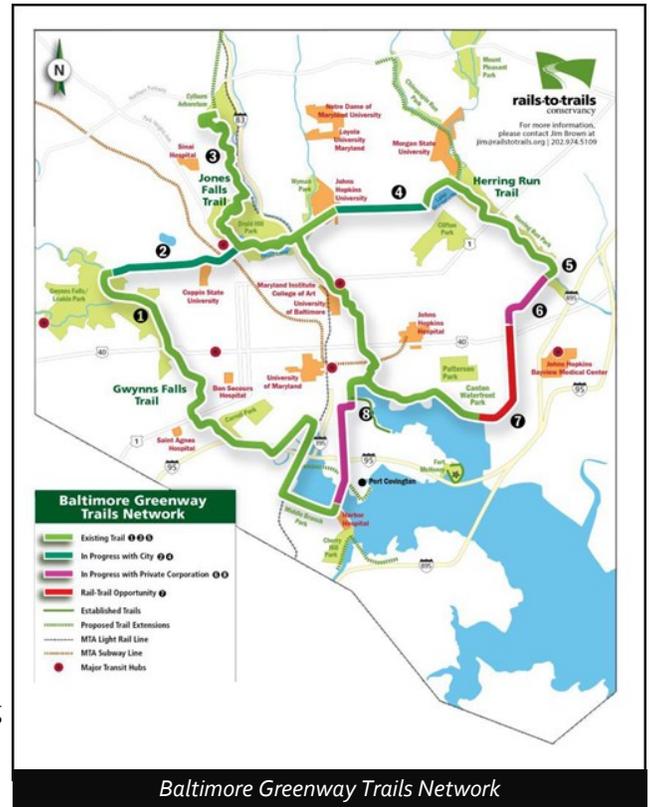
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Plan4Health: Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition – an Equitable Healthy Baltimore Connected by Trails

by: Jim Brown, ASLA, Manager of Trail Development, Rails to Trails Conservancy

In late 2015 the Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition, a group of planners and trail advocates working on active transportation, was awarded a *Plan4Health* grant to promote and plan the concept of creating a 35 mile trail network in Baltimore City. Spearheaded by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and Bikemore with support from MD APA and Citizens Planning and Housing Association, Inc., the emergent Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition received this innovative capacity building grant to form a coalition around the idea of using urban trails to create opportunities for better public health outcomes through promoting changes in the built environment. The *Plan4Health* project funds communities across the country



Baltimore Greenway Trails Network

working at the intersection of planning and public health. Anchored by American Planning Association chapters and American Public Health Association affiliates, *Plan4Health* supports creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions. The Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition was awarded this grant to address health equity and safe transportation infrastructure through building an urban trail network that connects existing trails to disconnected neighborhoods, parks, anchor institutions and amenities.

Opportunities for physical activity, resident mobility, and connectivity in Baltimore are inhibited by a combination of factors, including deindustrialization, auto-centric planning and single-use codes. Mobility and connectivity are hindered by a lack of public transportation options and over 30 percent of residents not having access to a car¹. Nearly 30 percent of residents also report no physical activity². These low rates of physical activity are accompanied by high rates of chronic disease, including obesity (31 percent), Type 2 diabetes (12.4 percent), and heart disease (26 percent)³. Additionally,

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Jim Noonan, AICP – Maryland’s Growth Management Champion

by David T. Whitaker, AICP, Chief of Comprehensive Planning, Frederick County Division of Planning & Permitting

On April 17, 2017, Jim Noonan died after a long battle with leukemia. He was 67 years old. For planners and elected officials who had the opportunity to work with him, most agree that few others have had the refined planning skill sets, listening ability or the humility that marked this low key, but effective, Baltimore native. While low key in character, Jim’s impact on Maryland land use will last for generations.

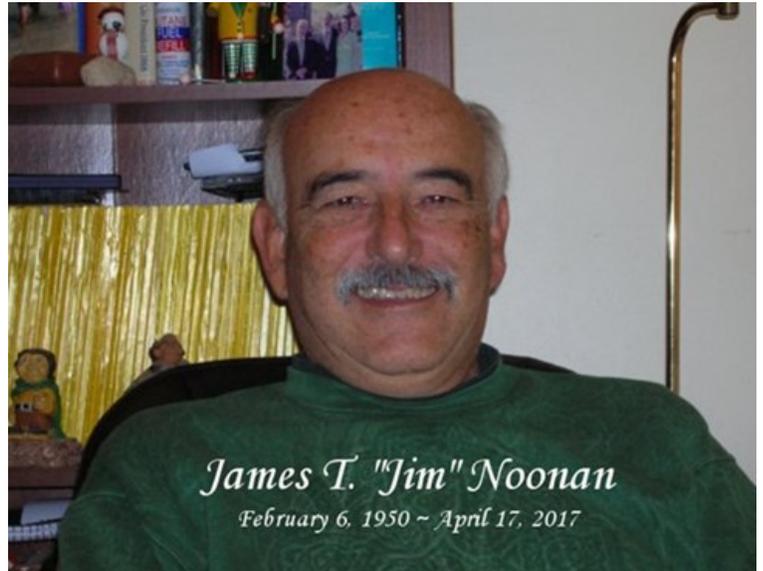
Jim Noonan was an anomaly among Maryland planning professionals. He was a man who not only advised on land use and development policies and processes, but possessed the skill sets to build real consensus among all parties on best practices to guide growth and development statewide. For several decades beginning in the 1970’s, Jim Noonan was a trusted

voice to planners, planning commissions and elected officials throughout Maryland. He was known and respected from Garrett County to Worcester County and from Westminster to Leonardtown. Jim was an advisor to Maryland’s chief policy makers from the Maryland statehouse to the Board of Public Works, although he possessed an “everyman character” which allowed him to effectively communicate with a zoning appeals board member from a small municipality to a town clerk.

Maryland’s 1992 Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act and the landmark 1997 Smart Growth & Neighborhood Conservation Act stand as testaments to Jim’s remarkable collaborative talent and his understanding of the politics of land use and the slowing of sprawl in Maryland. During the Glendening administration, while working for Ron Kreitner and Ron Young at the Maryland Office of Planning, Jim was successful in crafting land use guidance and regulations that empowered local governments to set their own geographies for statewide infrastructure spending. This pivotal legislation forever changed how land use and infrastructure planning are carried out on both a local and state level in Maryland.

A graduate of the University of Maryland in College Park, Jim spent three and a half decades of his career with State Planning in Baltimore. His expertise in transportation, infrastructure planning and public school construction were second to none and many improved their skill sets while working for or with Jim Noonan. His laugh and his sense of humor were often heard in agencies across state government and his ability to motivate staff to attend a happy hour at one of Baltimore’s finest dives was legendary. A very well read individual, Jim’s announcements often took the form of a historical documentary of the date of the event or of the notable people who had frequented a particular neighborhood or establishment. Jim taught many of his co-workers more about Edgar Allan Poe’s or H.L. Mencken’s Baltimore haunts than a certified Maryland tour guide.

The Maryland transportation projects that Jim worked on spanned decades, although he knew that the Maryland Intercountry Connector (ICC) would one day come back to his desk. Beginning in 2003, Jim worked tirelessly for three and a half years on the ICC NEPA project that ultimately obtained a Record of Decision from the Federal Highway Administration. His objective to limit the “sprawl impacts” of the chosen alignment never wavered. Most notably, Jim accompanied USDOT staff who personally met with home owners who were to be displaced by the approved alignment. Never an easy task, nor one that he was directed to do, Jim considered it his duty as a public servant to meet with home



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owners individually and listen to their concerns. His sense of responsibility and ethics to the profession and to the public were second to none.

In the end, Jim eschewed praise and merely wanted to be remembered by little more than a limerick with the word "Nantucket." With that distinctive Irish glimmer in his eye, Jim did add though ... that he "once knew a man from Nantucket and the stories about him are greatly exaggerated."

Maryland Chapter Membership Votes in Favor of Modernizing Dues

Change Will Go into Effect In 2018

by Peter G. Conrad, AICP, Maryland Chapter Vice President

On Friday, June 2nd at the ***Future of Planning: APA Maryland Chapter's Annual Meeting and One Day Conference***, Chapter members voted 40 to 18 in favor of changing the dues structure. The new membership rate will be set at 25% of the National APA dues, to be effective on January 1, 2018 for membership renewals thereafter. Dues for the Chapter only members are set at \$45 and are also effective on January 1, 2018 for membership renewals thereafter. A PDF that shows the resulting sliding scale dues structure for 2018 can be [accessed here](#).

Since 2006, the National APA has recommended that Chapters update their fees to a percentage of the National APA membership rates. In 2014, the National APA Chapter Presidents Council (CPC) voted to require each State to select a percentage-based dues fee by the end of 2017. The goal is that all State Chapters have a consistent membership dues calculation. This concept better aligns Chapters' dues structure with the dues structure that is currently utilized by the National APA and AICP memberships, where dues are determined on a sliding scale associated with the individual member's salary.

Previously, the Maryland Chapter dues were set at a flat fee of \$27.00 per year. Our Chapter dues were last changed in the mid 1990's, and prior to State Chapters making the change to sliding scale dues in 2016-2017, only 6 State Chapters charged less than Maryland. The Executive Committee of the Maryland Chapter did not take this obligation lightly. After careful consideration of our Chapter responsibilities, the services we need to provide to our members, and recent deficit spending, the Executive Committee believes that 25% is the minimum percent to adequately serve our members.

So, what can you expect to change as a result of this increase? The Executive Committee has gathered input from our members in the 2013 and 2015 member surveys on the kinds of services or programs. These proposed activities can serve as a baseline of discussions for expanded services. The Executive Committee has indicated that the At-Large Representatives (regional representatives) would need to engage their members, to identify how the Chapter can allocate resources to better serve regional members. One priority initiative would be to secure professional organizational services like the other State trade associations have done. This would allow us to provide better support service for engaging more of our members in Chapter activities.

And since we are talking about dues here, please keep in mind that the National APA sets all the dues [for other categories](#) including unemployed, in transition, retired, and life members. For these categories, Chapter dues are set at \$10. Student dues are a bit more complicated. Starting in July 2017, APA student membership will be free for any individual when first enrolled as a full- or part-time degree-seeking student in any college or university program. For this Student/Early Career category, dues transition upward in each subsequent year. More information about this change can be found on the [Chapter website](#).

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the unemployment rate is 6.1 percent (Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, April 2017) and the inability to reach a place of employment was identified by residents as the biggest barrier to staying employed⁴.

Baltimore boasts three significant urban trails: Gwynns Falls, Jones Falls and Herring Run. Each of these trails is a community asset; however, they are not connected, severely limiting their potential to positively impact area residents. The Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition believes these three existing greenways can serve as the framework to create an interconnected trail and public-space network—building upon groundwork over 100



years ago in Frederick Olmsted Jr.'s *Plan for Baltimore*. The Coalition has identified four key gaps to focus community engagement and trail development that will create the completed off road shared use trail network. They include an unused railroad line in Highlandtown, the Port Covington region of South Baltimore, the Gwynns Falls Parkway corridor in West Baltimore and the 33rd Street corridor in northeast Baltimore. These geographic locales have guided community engagement and planning to date.

After a project kickoff in November 2015, the coalition began regularly convening and cultivating relationships under the premise that when people have safe places to walk and bike, they are more likely to meet the recommended activity levels than those who don't⁵. The Coalition also found partner organizations, residents and elected officials became increasingly engaged when the public health aspects of the project were discussed in the framework of a tool for social equity and economic development. To date the Coalition has had multiple community meetings, briefings with elected officials, and diverse neighborhood events designed to engage residents, stakeholders and decisions makers around the idea of building an urban trail network.

The work of the Coalition to date had been guided by five goals identified in the Community Action Plan in the *Plan4Health* grant:

Build the Capacity of the Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition

Create Demonstration Projects on streetscapes and on-road trails

Leverage Partnerships with public and private-sector partners

Cross pollinate the policies, plans and metrics of the partnership

Develop Communications networks for the effort

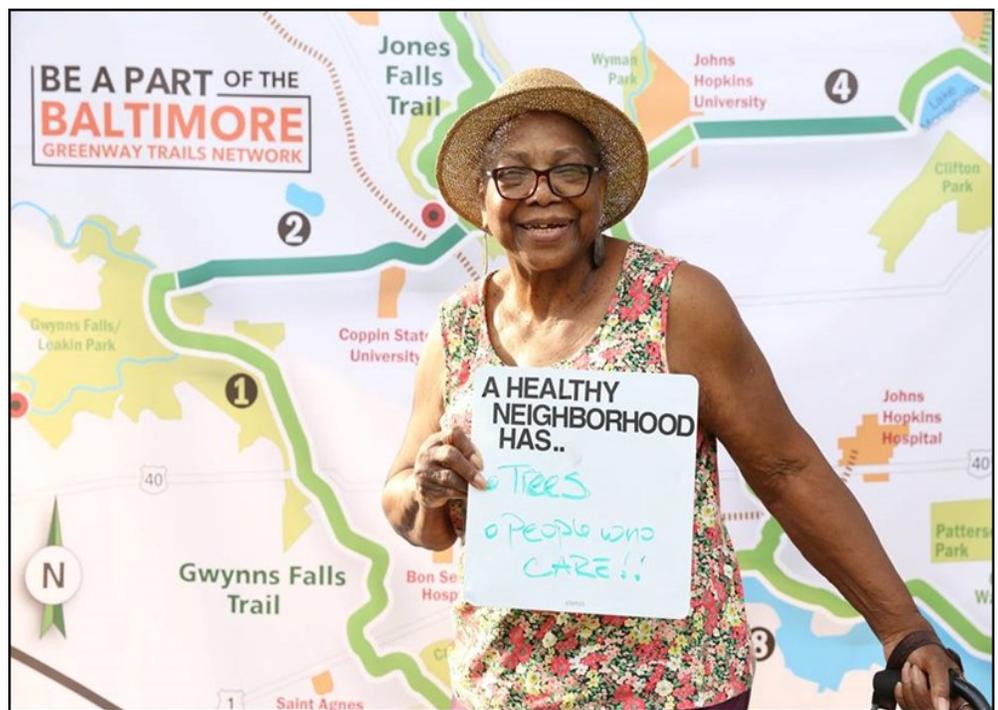
Two examples of *Plan4Health* funded work include grass roots outreach in Greater Mondawmin and partner cultivation along the Middle Branch. In the Greater Mondawmin neighborhoods of West Baltimore, Coalition leadership worked with community leaders, non-profits and the Druid Hill Farmers Market to identify goals of safer access to Druid Hill Park and the Jones Falls Trail for residents. In November 2016, Coalition leadership led an informational tour of South and West Baltimore highlighting how existing and future trails will be an integral part to quickly changing Middle Branch.

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Over the last two years through multiple activities such as these, the Coalition has been able to leverage successes and add to the sustainability of the project. Foremost, the coalition now has nearly 50 active partner organizations representing a diverse group of stakeholders and communities across Baltimore. These partners include anchor institutions, such as universities and hospitals; community associations across the city; public agencies at the city, state, and federal level; non-profits working on community development, economic equity, and community greening across Baltimore; and the members of private sector ranging from local small businesses to developers and major employers.

The work will continue throughout 2017, and will be used in partnership with the City to leverage state and federal funds for trail construction. As part of ongoing partnerships with City agencies, Coalition work has informed pieces of the *Green Network Plan* being developed by the Baltimore City Department of Planning, and Coalition work is helping to implement pieces of the Department of Transportation's *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*. This work is also elevating the shared goals of the City Health Department and Recreation and Parks Department to increase opportunities for healthy lifestyles for residents in Baltimore's shared public spaces.

The Coalition has learned that there is in fact a need to convene residents and leaders around this important intersection of urban planning and public health. Too often the two are seen as disparate disciplines working in silos. Goals for the upcoming year include increasing partnerships with the public health field, and replicating successful outreach strategies from the *Plan4Health* grant in Greater Mondawmin and Middle Branch to all areas of Baltimore. For large transformative projects to take place broad-based diverse partnerships are necessary and it is important to effectively and simultaneously maintain open relationships with communities "out in the field" and decision makers "downtown." The *Plan4Health* Community Action Plan framework gives Coalition partners the tools to implement those strategies as residents and stakeholders get excited about a city connected by trails.



Learn more and join us at: <https://www.railstotrails.org/our-work/projects/baltimore-greenway-trails-coalition/>

Follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/BaltimoreGreenwayTrailsCoalition>

¹Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance

²Centers for Disease Control

³Centers for Disease Control

⁴Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance

⁵Places to Walk: Convenience and Regular Physical Activity, *American Journal of Public Health* (2003)

BaltimoreLink: Connecting You to Life's Opportunities

by Paul Comfort

(Editors' note: Mr. Paul Comfort submitted this article at the time when he worked for MTA.)

On Sunday, June 18, the Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT/ MTA) implemented BaltimoreLink that is Governor Larry Hogan's multi-phase plan to create an interconnected transit system by redesigning the entire local and express bus systems throughout Baltimore. BaltimoreLink adds 12 new high-frequency, color-coded bus routes (called CityLink) that improve connections to jobs and to the MARC Train, Metro Subway, and Light Rail. BaltimoreLink transforms Baltimore's half-a-century-old and outdated transit network with new bus-only dedicated lanes, transit signal priority, a new transfer hub network, and rebrands and replaces more than 5,000 transit signs, expands commuter bus service, adds new shared bicycle availability and provides access to car-sharing options.

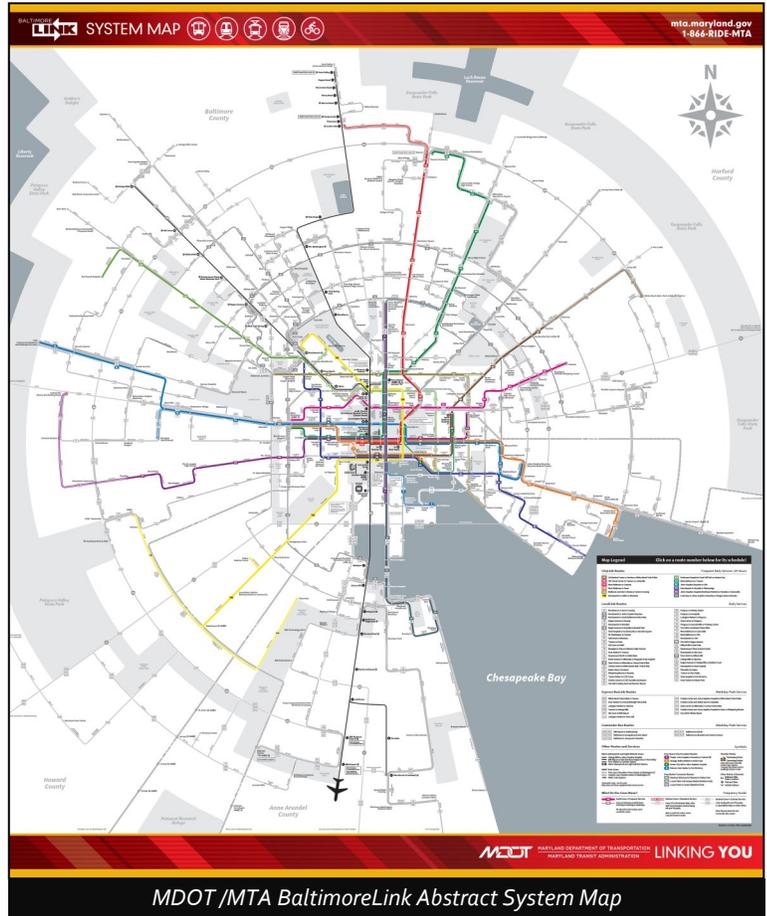
Every route in the Baltimore's transit system changed on June 18, and MTA is hard at work to make sure that current customers and potential new riders are aware of what's happening. MTA deployed the BaltimoreLink Info Bus on all the existing routes, using a different route each day. The Info Bus picked up riders for free and took them to the regular stops on the route. On board the bus, route experts talked with passengers about how BaltimoreLink would impact their trip, improve their commute and enable them to reach places they need to go.

When BaltimoreLink launched, MTA street teams – known as BaltimoreLink Ambassadors – were available at bus stops, on board buses and at key transit centers to answer questions and to promote awareness of the service changes.

MTA is also partnering with the Center for Mobility Equity to provide comprehensive training for senior riders, persons with disabilities and students on how to safely and independently use the new BaltimoreLink system. The Center for Mobility Equity provides instruction for locations with vulnerable populations such as senior centers and health care facilities, hold community travel training sessions throughout the region and conduct one-on-one sessions with MTA Mobility customers. Learn more by visiting the Center for Mobility Equity's website at cmrtransit.org/travel-training.

Finally, be sure to visit the BaltimoreLink website at baltimorelink.com and see the exciting changes. It's full of easy-to-use resources. You can see how your exiting route changed using our trip planner and get details on all the new routes on an interactive system map.

BaltimoreLink is the biggest, most comprehensive improvement to Baltimore region's transit system in over a generation. It is MTA's premier initiative to deliver safe, efficient, reliable transit with the world-class customer service. If you haven't ridden MTA in a while, take some time to see how MTA can get you everywhere you need to go.



Livable Frederick: A Vision and Scenario-Based Approach to Comprehensive Planning

by by Mike Paone and David Whitaker, AICP, Frederick County Department of Planning and Permitting

Livable Frederick is a Vision and Scenario-Based Comprehensive Plan effort currently underway in Frederick County, Maryland. It is based on a “systems approach,” which is intended to inform and guide future public policy on transportation, land use, economic development and work force development, housing, agriculture, public facility, health & recreation, environmental and energy decisions to the year 2050.

Livable Frederick builds on 50 years of planning history of the County dating from its first comprehensive land use plan adopted in January of 1959. Frederick County has gone from a predominantly rural, small town, agricultural community to a suburbanizing bedroom community, to a maturing county with an established employment base and a prominent regional economy anchored by the City of Frederick. Frederick County currently has a January 2017 population of 249,054 persons and the City of Frederick has a population of 69,515 (Source: Frederick County Planning and Permitting Division).

Livable Frederick follows a planning guidance format outlined in *APA Planning Advisory Service No. 578: Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans*. The comprehensive plan standards are organized into a framework of related components: Six Principles, Two Processes, and Two Attributes. Collectively, these principles, processes, attributes and supporting best practices outline a process that seeks to design and build (1) a Livable Built Environment, (2) Harmony With Nature, (3) a Resilient Economy, (4) Interwoven Equity, (5) a Healthy Community; and (6) Responsible Regionalism. This process is overseen by a Steering Committee which guides staff and the planning commission in plan development.



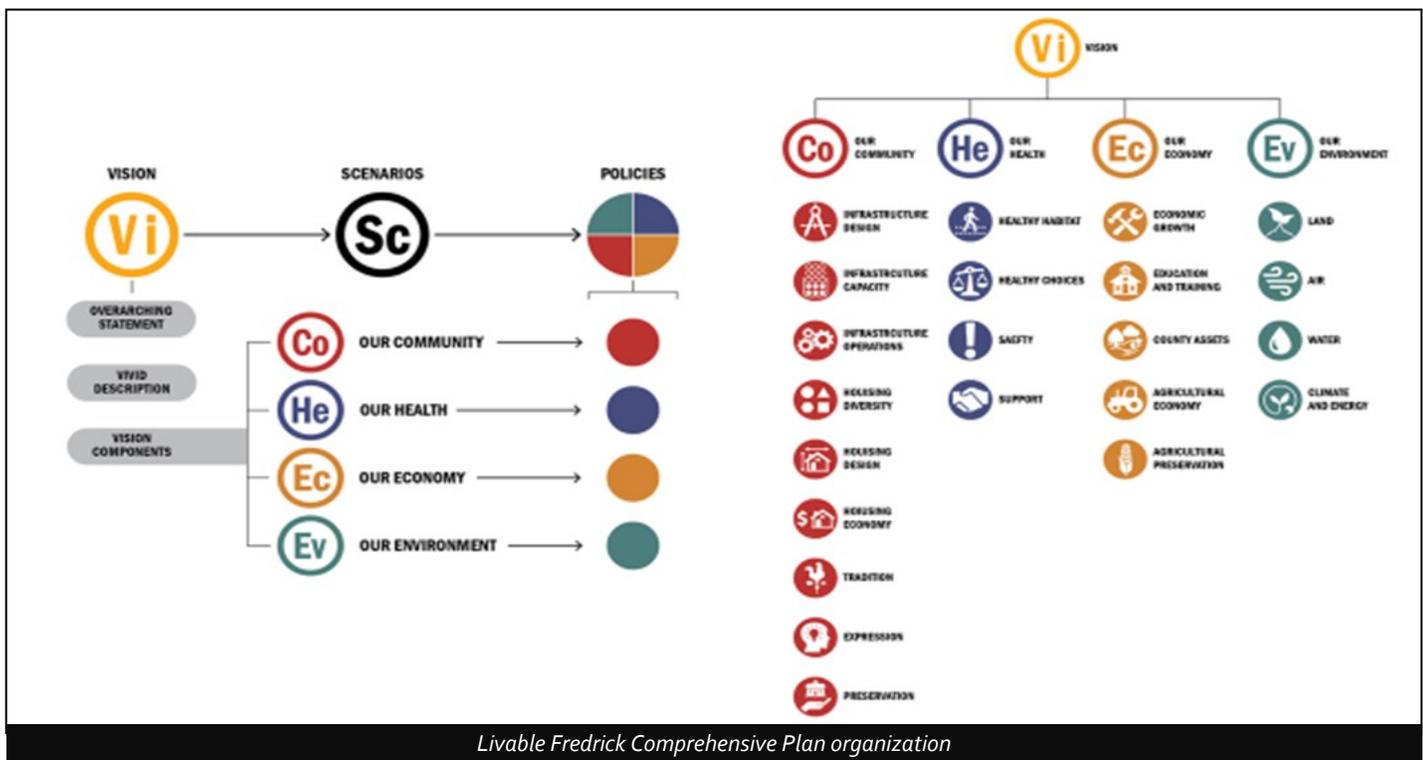
Livable Frederick is a broad, more conceptual, comprehensive plan effort based upon a countywide Community Vision, which is evident from the structure of the document itself. From the outset this plan built a broad public participation component and incorporated other tools such as Scenario Planning and Multi-Modal Analysis with a focus on key themes. The *Livable Frederick* planning process has incorporated a Steering Committee and eight Work Groups, a countywide vision survey, extensive volunteer support, and substantial public and municipal outreach. It analyzes future growth scenarios for the mid-century and includes development of a policy structure and a thematic general plan map to address a myriad number of future growth challenges facing Frederick County over the next several decades. The graph below provides an overview of the many community organizations and sectors who are involved in a community wide vision-based comprehensive planning effort.

Livable Frederick seeks to avoid the structural limitations of traditional land-use driven comprehensive plans which often follow and build upon a linear growth process. These types of planning processes usually produce similar results, promoting a limited range of development types and a reduced number of housing and transportation choices. These types of planning practices are often ineffective at incorporating the goals and aspirations of residents and businesses and the community vision is rarely an integrated element of the planning process. By default or intent, they usually perpetuate the status quo, with some tweaks, but with an incomplete understanding of the long term ramifications and economic and social costs of current growth patterns.

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The four *Livable Frederick* Themes are: “Our Communities,” “Our Health,” “Our Economy” and “Our Environment.” Each of the four Themes incorporate traditional comprehensive plan elements. These elements are linked together throughout the plan to provide an integrated approach to future growth, rather than included as separate elements. For example: Housing initiatives are linked with Transportation initiatives. Housing initiatives are linked to Healthy Communities, and Agriculture and Work Force Development initiatives are linked to Our Economy.

Livable Frederick employs an “eyes wide open” Scenario building process that allows policy makers and elected officials to make more informed choices of the policies, planning and infrastructure decisions that they will encounter over several decades. Large naval convoys do not change course easily. The same is true of large county governments. If change is sought, it must be agreed upon and be phased in over decades in order to achieve the Vision sought by the greater public. To do this effectively requires extensive commitment and purpose and successful collaboration among many different sectors within the community.



Four future growth scenarios were prepared for Livable Frederick. The scenario choices included, **Trend/Business As Usual; City Center** which focuses on future growth in and around the City of Frederick and nearby areas of the county; **Suburban Place Making** which focuses on reinvesting in older suburban areas and supporting revitalization through infrastructure upgrades and infill development; **Multi Modal Places and Corridors** which uses existing rail lines and proposed transit corridors to build multimodal connectivity with the City of Frederick as the transportation and economic hub for the county.

Three of the scenario options focus on improving transportation options, building walkable and multi-modal communities, and creating an improved green infrastructure. The Planning Commission and the Steering Committee currently favor a hybrid scenario that supports transit oriented development along the rail lines focuses considerable development in and around the City of Frederick where the infrastructure exists or is planned, and supports infill development in key locations around the county. Infill development promotes the use of improved transit, walkable communities, enhanced economic development and preservation of Frederick County’s vital agricultural lands and agricultural economy.

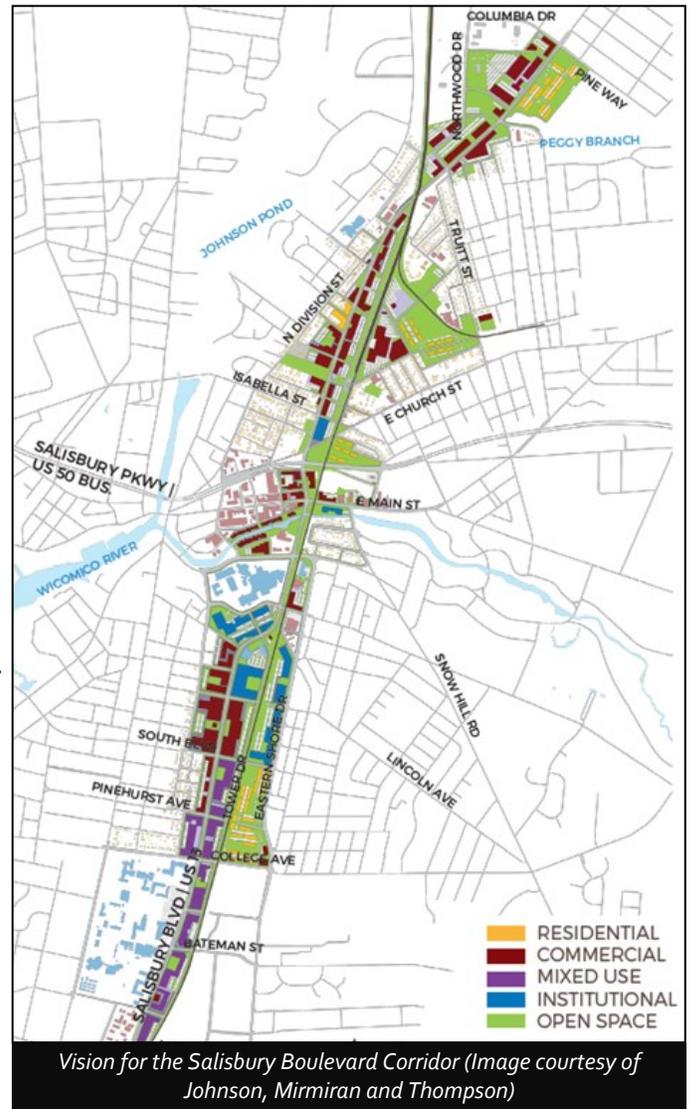
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Planning for the Future in Salisbury

by Mayor Jake Day, City of Salisbury, Maryland and Allysha Lorber, PLA, AICP, Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc.

Salisbury, Maryland has come a long way, but planning for the future is one of the primary concerns of City leaders right now. Salisbury is Maryland's fastest growing City and America's 7th fastest growing job market. It is the only political jurisdiction on Maryland's Eastern Shore that is adding population – and at a rapid clip. This boom is the result of a vision of Salisbury becoming a cultural and economic heart for the Delmarva Peninsula – only 2.5 hours from Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, and Norfolk. Today, Salisbury is a unique blend of eastern shore charm, historic significance, high quality green spaces, and a growing cosmopolitan vibe. Accommodating growth while preserving what makes Salisbury unique has special opportunities and challenges in this community dubbed as the Capital of the Eastern Shore.

The City of Salisbury has always recognized that people, process and product are all important to the planning process. However, we have really focused in the past two years on transitioning from a staid, state-mandated planning rhythm to a higher intensity of small-scale and district planning projects. The purpose is to help communicate our vision that has largely lived only in words, and to create implementable plans that push us quickly toward funding, engineering, building, and benefitting from critical and connected infrastructure projects. Our planning principles focus on *how* people, process, and product matter in the growth of Salisbury. These principles are evident in the recent success with new investments happening throughout downtown and beyond.



Vision for the Salisbury Boulevard Corridor (Image courtesy of Johnson, Mirmiran and Thompson)

At the core of our purpose is to empower the people of Salisbury and improve quality of life. We seek to engage the interested and affected people in planning processes; not through public forums but always through hands-on activities such as walks and charrettes. We seek to collaborate in iterative, multi-step projects in quick succession so that many projects are through the planning phase in time for them to rapidly sequence into the engineering/development phase. We seek to develop products that are implementable, bidable, legible, engaging and easily understood by the public. This has created a lot of interest and momentum in building Salisbury's future as the premier urban destination of the Eastern Shore.

We are actively preparing for the growth and transformation of our city with several planning initiatives. In just 18 months, we have adopted a *20-Year Downtown Master Plan*, a *Zoo Master Plan*, a *City Park Master Plan*, a *Bicycle Master Plan*, an *Urban Greenway/Riverwalk Master Plan*, and *Salisbury Boulevard Corridor Plan*, and we are now working on a *Rail-Trail Plan*. We have only just begun, and we look forward to the next steps to implement projects making our vision a reality.

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In the coming years, you can expect a lot to happen in Salisbury. New development will come into downtown and along the Salisbury Boulevard corridor bringing new job opportunities and services for our community. New housing will offer more choices for an urban lifestyle. Our transportation network will offer more choices to walk, bike, or take transit to get around town. Our parks will be upgraded and new trails will link the communities to these high quality open spaces. It won't all happen at once because these are changes that take time, but each year there will be progress made. Come visit to see for yourself, and stay as long as you like.



Planned separated cycle track on Carroll Street as part of the Urban Greenway Plan
(Image Courtesy of Johnson, Mirmiran and Thompson)

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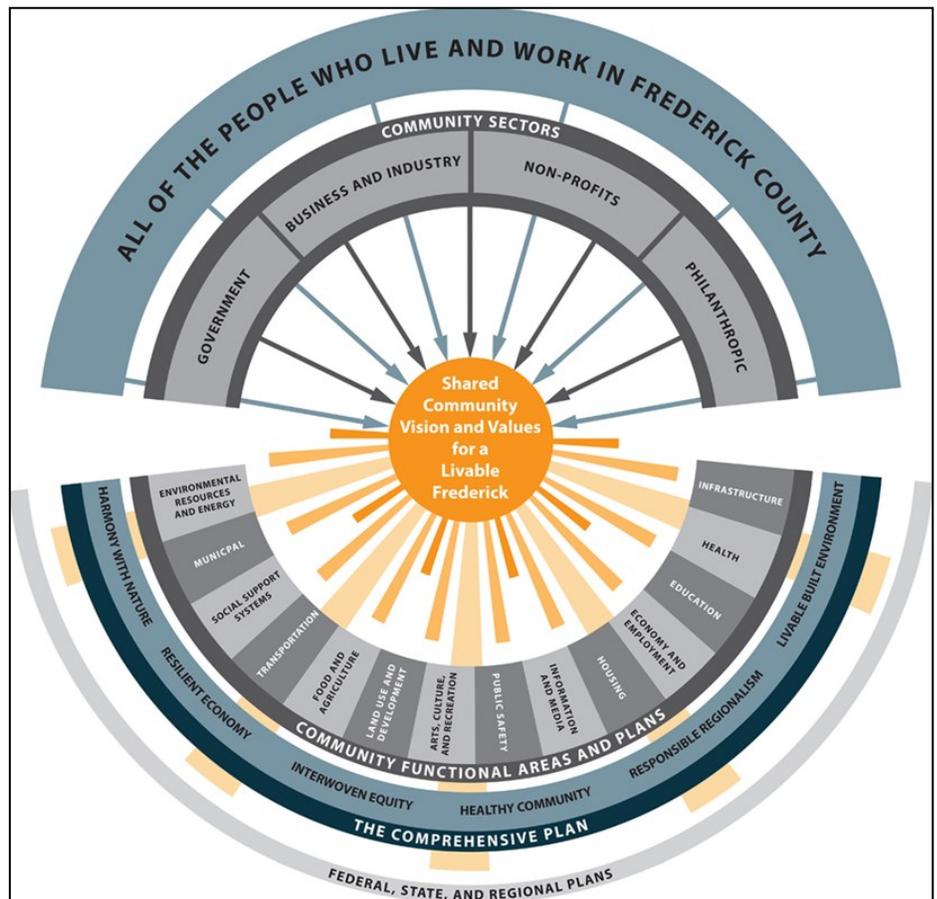
Together, the future growth scenario supported by Themes and Initiatives are intended to provide the key foundations for sustainable and resilient community growth in Frederick County in the 21st century with the Community Vision as a guide for our communities through the mid-century. Currently, Livable Frederick is under review by the Frederick County Planning Commission. Public Outreach meetings will occur during the summer of 2017 with adoption in the winter of 2018. For additional information visit Livable Frederick Website and Social Media Links:

Website: <http://livablefrederick.org/>

Twitter: #livablefrederick

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LivableFrederick/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/livablefrederick/>



Involved parties in developing Livable Fredrick