

# Freedom Plan Update and Path Forward

(DRAFT V3.1a)

Commissioner Doug Howard  
Commissioner Richard Rothschild

# Freedom Plan is off-course- Why?

- Unclear instructions from commissioners
- Conflicting messages from commissioners
- Infrastructure Tail is wagging the Dog
- Public feedback not being fully considered

# Where does this leave us?

## NEED TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTION

1. Ensure we have a correct underlying premise:
  - a. “Where to put the growth?” is not the question;

It should be...

- b. “What is the Community’s Vision for their Future, and How do we achieve it?”

# MOST BASIC PREMISE OF PLANNING:

- Plan should implement Community Vision
- Vision must reflect feedback from the community

# MDP TRAINING Module One:

## Introduction to Planning 1

Module One: Introduction to Planning 101

### Introduction

We begin with an introduction to the basic concepts of planning in the context of the following perspectives: Social values and issues, legal framework and the historical context.

### What is planning?

Planning is undertaken to set a course of action that will shape the future in terms of how land is used. Planning is basically a function of the following:

### A Community's Vision for the Future

The vision is often expressed as a statement of what the community will be in the future, if all goes as planned. For example, some communities envision economic growth in the form of new businesses and industry, while others see retaining their current scale and role as a place for small town living; some communities' vision is to retain their rural heritage in locations outside of population and economic centers and to protect and enhance the natural environment.

### Accounting for the Past and Present

Plans for the future should consider what has happened in the past. Thus, knowledge about past and present trends in terms of the misuse of land uses, the rate of population growth, the loss of forest and agricultural lands, the extraction of mineral resources, and the quality of the environment is a necessary step in the planning process.

### Goals, Objectives, Policies: Tools to Realize the Vision

Planning should adhere to some rational framework in order to make progress towards the vision. Planning requires a description of the manner in which the vision will be pursued. It does this by establishing formal goals (a desired end that is established for a range of topics, from the environment to the economy), objectives (specific steps and products that reflect the goals and topics), and policies (specific decision-making rules and guidelines).

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# FLAWED PREMISE:

- More high density housing must be promoted because infrastructure exists
  - Counterpoint: Infrastructure is necessary, but NOT sufficient to justify high density housing
  - Counterpoint- Data from Devaney Associates, MRIS, and Public Feedback, does not support this premise.

# Devaney & Assoc. Research



Devaney & Associates, Inc.  
advertising, marketing & public relations

## Community Features Satisfy Emotional Needs

### Emotion:

- Safety
- Community
- Comfort
- Peace
- Confidence in Our Investment
- A Better Quality of Life
- A Place to Raise our Family
- Happiness

### Feature:

- Low Crime Rate
- A Friendly, Small-Town Culture
- Larger Homes/Lots
- Country Living, Close to the Cities
- Affordability
- Value
- Great Schools
- All of the Above

# Devaney & Assoc. Research



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Advertising, Marketing & Public Relations

## AFFORDABILITY:

## #1 BEST VALUE IN MARYLAND



In Carroll County, your hard-earned dollar means something more. That's because, here, homes cost less, property taxes are lower, and you get more square footage to call your own. Between that and our outstanding schools and low crime rates, it's no wonder why SmartAsset named Carroll County the #1 best value in Maryland and Southern Pennsylvania.

<https://smartasset.com/taxes/maryland-property-tax-calculatorus/ta>



# Devaney & Assoc. Research

*“They [SmartAsset] have named Carroll County for 3 years in a row now, the Best Value in the State of Maryland”*

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governing, marketing & public relations

## SmartAsset's Best Value for Your Money in Maryland & Southern PA

Rank	County	Property Tax Rate	School Rating	Crimes Per 100k People	Overall Value Index
1	Carroll, MD	1.02%	10.00	1603	49.81
2	Harford, MD	1.09%	9.00	1898	42.19
3	Queen Annes, MD	0.85%	8.00	1977	39.40
4	Calvert, MD	0.96%	8.00	1933	39.29
5	Garrett, MD	0.82%	5.00	2348	38.12
6	Talbot, MD	0.64%	6.00	1950	36.16
7	Frederick, MD	1.16%	9.00	1964	36.09
8	Montgomery, MD	0.93%	8.00	1772	31.52
9	Saint Marys, MD	0.92%	7.00	2503	31.15
10	Worcester, MD	0.83%	10.00	4528	28.13
	<b>MD</b>	<b>1.10%</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>3095</b>	

\*Where people are getting the most for their property tax dollars based on school rankings, crime rates, and property taxes

<https://smartasset.com/taxes/maryland-property-tax-calculator/>

# MRIS Statistics (July 2018)

- 87 homes listed as “Active” in Freedom.
- Average Days-on-Market (DOM) was a very brief 59 days... indicating sales are robust & competitive
- Analysis of Properties listed and sold in Q1/Q2 CY2018 an amazingly low average Days-on-Market (DOM) of only 18 days.
- These metrics clearly indicate these homes are “affordable” to a vast segment of buyers that value the quality of lifestyle offered by Freedom’s existing communities.

# Public Hearing statistics

## July 11, 2018

# OPPOSED to increasing densities:	41
# SUPPORTING increasing densities:	1

**OBSERVATION: The implied premise that the community wants more growth, more density, and more affordable housing is...**

- Not supported by Devaney Associates research
- Not supported by MRIS multiple list statistics
- Not supported by community feedback
- Not supported by the District 4 and District 5 Commissioners, and other elected officials

## Commissioners Howard & Rothschild Agree:

The 2018 iteration took us further away from the Community Vision.

In retrospect, the 2017 Plan, with some modest adjustments, can be made viable. A marked-up draft, that addresses Community concerns is complete and ready for review by the BoCC.

# Streamline summary of proposed refinements (4 categories) to 2017 approved plan

## 1. Vision Statement & Goals Alignment

- A. Eliminate confusion between state visions vs. DGA vision vs. Community Vision
- B. Refine Community Vision statement to better align with community feedback, and branding strengths as outlined by Devaney research and marketing presentation.
- C. Bring Plan Goals & Recommendations into better alignment with Community Vision.
- D. Proposed updates to pages: 2-4; 22-24; 27; 28; 29; 48; 79; 99; 100; 129

# **Streamline summary of proposed refinements to 2017 approved plan**

## **2. Clarification of Multi-Generational Housing, and Transportation issues**

- A. Clarify definition of M-GH based on data from AARP and National Association of Realtors
- B. Include data from Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
- C. Proposed updates to pages: 57-59; 176; 206

# **Streamline summary of proposed refinements to 2017 approved plan**

## **3. Update Housing Analysis to better reflect highly desirable nature of the Community**

- A. Devaney research corroborates community feedback and Vision .
- B. Proposed updates to pages: 50; 51; 55; 62; 63



# Streamline summary of proposed refinements to 2017 approved plan

## 4. Land Use Designation & Zoning refinement

- A. Adopt Planning Commission's 2018 Appendix D: Future Land Use Definitions (with minor adjustments) into the 2017 Plan.
  - 1. Added a "SCHOOL" land use designation in response to community feedback
- B. Adopt Planning Commission's 2018 Future Land Use Map, subject to 4 adjustments
- C. Proposed updates to pages: 90; 97; Replace 211-212 with 214-215

# Why we need to get this done now...

- 1. Community has 4+ years invested in this process, and expects us to finish it;**
- 2. This BoCC has an excellent understanding of the few remaining issues; and agreed to complete the Plan this term;**
- 3. The Plan process has been extended several times, and re-creating the process is unlikely to change either (a) the community feedback; or the (b) the need to incorporate the feedback;**

# Why we need to get this done now...

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- 4. Continued delay has negative impact on property owners, because of ongoing ambiguity and delays.**
- 5. Need to put this behind us, and allow the next BoCC to focus on other profoundly important countywide issues.**

# Motion

1. In light of the information set forth and summarized in this presentation, and to ensure the Freedom Plan properly reflects the Vision of the Community, I move the Board of Commissioners...
  - (a) Rescind the remand of the July 2017 Plan;
  - (b) Extend the consideration period by 60 days due to exigent circumstances.
  
2. Also: Schedule a meeting (soon) to refine the 2017 Plan as generally set-forth in this presentation, and materials, prepared by Commissioners Howard & Rothschild for discussion and possible decision.

Questions?