



ALLIANCE
FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Regional Plans after Plan2040 could Empower Communities

**A special message for
Alliance organizations and
guests...**



Opportunities exist to increase citizen participation in land use decisions

County Planning and Zoning staff together with the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) are now creating some of the foundation documents for the Plan2040 GDP. A [vision document](#) has been drafted and posted, Policy Area overlays have been discussed, and [nine Regional Planning Areas](#) have been drafted that partition the County into geographical areas that will have associated citizen-based planning committees. The Regional Planning Committees will have at least 11 members representing a broad cross-section of local stakeholders and will carry out the detailed planning appropriate to their area. Work on the Regional Plans is expected to begin shortly after adoption of Plan2040. Afterward, Regional Plan recommendations can be reviewed and approved by the County Council.

Regional Planning carried out with policy guidance from Plan2040 provides an opportunity for regional direction of local land and zoning. This approach differs from the centralized Comprehensive Rezoning process used for the 2009 GDP. Comprehensive rezoning following the 2009 GDP began with any property owner desiring rezoning in any part of the County filing an application with the Planning and Zoning Office. Applications filed were viewable online. Three bills were then introduced for the County's seven legislative districts, with each containing the zoning recommendations of P&Z. All bills were subject to amendments by Council Members. The Planning and Zoning Office testified on all except "last minute" amendments and determined whether the amendments were supported by the GDP. The entire rezoning process took over a year, and most rezoning and land use recommendations were made by persons who did not live near the community affected by the rezoning.

Frederick County is demonstrating a land use and zoning process based on regional planning in their Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan. Their approach is designed to be responsive to local community perspectives. Comprehensive rezoning does not have to occur immediately after passage of the GDP, and the Frederick planning process began with a general development plan than had only broad general recommendations regarding land use and zoning. Using this general plan as guidance, regional plans will then address land use and zoning issues at the parcel level. This

allows local communities to fully engage with the planning and rezoning process and encourages results that are synchronized with desires of the local communities. Zoning recommendations are made by citizens who live near the proposed rezoning area.

In Anne Arundel County, deferring land use and zoning recommendation to the Regional Planning Committees would eliminate the need for countywide Comprehensive Rezoning to immediately follow initial passage of Plan2040. Similar to the Frederick County process, this approach would allow much greater engagement of local communities in land use decisions that directly affect their well-being. It could also reduce the workload of the County Council and diffuse the impact of development interests that are often focused on the Council members.

ALC recommends that all local land use and zoning recommendations be developed by the coming Regional Area Plans, and that this sequence be specified in the Plan2040 General Development Plan.

CAC meetings

Citizen Advisory Committee meetings are held the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 5 pm. Open to the public, but no public comment. Video recordings are posted. Go to [this page](#) for email links to CAC representatives.

About the Alliance

The Anne Arundel Alliance for Livable Communities is a non-partisan coalition of 25 local and state organizations advocating for sustainable growth and environmental protections to safeguard and enhance residents' quality of life.

Anne Arundel Alliance for Livable Communities



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