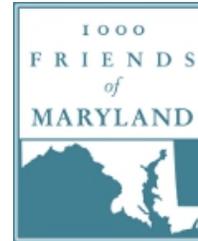




Local Leaders Council



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Maryland's local elected leaders join together to promote sustainability and smart growth

New *Maryland Chapter* of the Local Leaders Council brings together local officials from across the state to exchange strategies and lessons in smart growth implementation

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Smart Growth America and 1000 Friends of Maryland are proud to announce the launch of the Maryland Chapter of the Local Leaders Council – a nonpartisan network of elected and high level appointed officials from cities and counties across the state. The Maryland Chapter will facilitate collaboration and networking among local decision makers who share a passion for building sustainable communities with strong economies and good housing and transportation options near jobs, shops and schools.

“From the mountains of Western Maryland to the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, communities across the state share a common interest in striving to create jobs, attract sustained economic development and make great places to live, work and play,” said Anne Arundel County Councilmember Chris Trumbauer, Chair of the Advisory Board to the new Maryland Chapter. “The Maryland Chapter of the Local Leaders Council affords us the opportunity to share our successes and also help each other tackle our common challenges.”

The Advisory Board (full roster attached) is comprised of 10 local elected officials representing diverse cities, towns, and counties from the central, southern, western, and eastern regions of Maryland. At the inaugural meeting held in Annapolis in early November, Board Members discussed shared goals, policy themes, and upcoming opportunities for the new statewide network.

“This project will provide us with tools and resources to build the type of neighborhoods all people want to live in – healthy, stable, and vibrant,” said Edmonston Councilmember Tracy Farrish Gant, Vice-chair of the Advisory Board. “That support is crucial, especially for smaller communities with limited budgets.”

The State of Maryland has been recognized nationally as a smart growth leader. However, there are still many challenges that require thoughtful and visionary leadership particularly at the local level. The Maryland Chapter will provide technical assistance and other resources to cultivate, support, and promote such leadership.

“The State of Maryland has a strong history of utilizing smart growth to help existing communities thrive and protect and our vital natural assets,” said Governor Parris Glendening, who served as Maryland Governor from 1995 to 2003 and as a local elected official for over two decades prior to that. Currently, he serves as President of Smart Growth America’s Leadership Institute. “The Maryland Chapter is an exciting opportunity for leaders throughout the State to carry on that legacy and unlock the growth potential in each of their communities.”

“We want to support and assist leaders working to strengthen their towns and counties,” said Dru Schmidt-Perkins, President of 1000 Friends of Maryland. “These are leaders on the forefront of innovative policymaking. Through the Maryland Chapter they can support one another as well as inspire those with similar goals in other jurisdictions.”

The Advisory Board will work together with Smart Growth America and 1000 Friends of Maryland to shape and grow the Maryland Chapter. For more information, visit <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/local-leaders-council/maryland>.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

1000 Friends of Maryland works for a better quality of life by engaging all Marylanders to achieve vibrant communities and healthy rural economies. 1000 Friends of Maryland works on the basis of sound information and knowledge to convince decision-makers and the public to look to the future and not just to tomorrow. For additional information visit <http://FriendsofMD.org/>.

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