



The Urban Land Institute – Baltimore District Council
The National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education, University of Maryland
1000 Friends of Maryland

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301-405-6793

January 26, 2006

[CONTACT NAME]
[ORGANIZATION NAME]
[STREET ADDRESS]
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP CODE]

Re: Support for *Reality Check Plus*

Dear [CONTACT NAME]:

Have you noticed how fast the state of Maryland is growing? Do you realize that by 2030, Maryland's population will be 1.5 million people larger than it was in the year 2000? That's an increase from 5.5 million to 7 million people. Where will all those new residents live and work? What will be the impact of all this growth on traffic congestion, on farming, and on our environment, including the Chesapeake Bay? Will we be able to supply housing at affordable prices to meet the needs of all these new residents?

We invite you to help us answer these and related questions by giving your support – by lending the name of your organization, by volunteering, and/or by donating money – to a statewide growth visioning effort underway called *Reality Check Plus*.

This effort is not led by government, but rather is organized by three primary organizations:

The Baltimore District Council of the Urban Land Institute – a nonprofit research and education organization representing the spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines from the public and private sector.

1000 Friends of Maryland – a statewide citizen coalition that advocates for “smart growth” solutions to development in Maryland.

The National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education – a land use research center at the University of Maryland in College Park.

Together, these three organizations have developed a diverse coalition of more than 100 organizations and businesses from throughout the state to develop, finance and otherwise support this project. (See the enclosed brochure for a partial list of the project's supporters, or visit our website at www.realitycheckmaryland.org for a more current listing.)

We are planning to hold four separate regional growth visioning exercises in May and June 2006 in Central Maryland, the Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland and Western Maryland, respectively. Through discourse and negotiation, participants will be asked to propose alternate growth scenarios using table-sized maps and blocks representing the new complement of population and employment projected in their region by 2030. Statewide, more than 1,000 government, business, nonprofit and community leaders will participate in the *Reality Check Plus* exercises.

After the regional exercises are over, the results from the four regions will be combined to produce a statewide vision for growth in Maryland. These results will be presented in fall 2006 at a statewide summit that will focus on

developing and executing an implementation plan to turn the collaborative vision into our state's future reality. In fact, what distinguishes this effort from previous visioning exercises in Maryland is that it is:

- Privately led;
- Statewide; and,
- Action-oriented.

Reality Check Plus is designed to accomplish the following four tasks:

- Develop a collective vision for growth, development and conservation in the state;
- Identify differences between that vision and current trends;
- Identify the policy changes that will be needed to change those trends; and,
- Work to implement those policy changes.

On behalf of the three co-sponsors and other participating organizations in *Reality Check Plus*, we encourage [ORGANIZATION NAME] to become a supporter of this exciting opportunity to shape Maryland's future. Multiple sponsorship levels are available that provide varying levels of visibility for your organization on our website, at the event, and in a variety of media and event materials. (See the enclosed document highlighting the support tiers.) We are also currently seeking volunteers to staff the four regional events. If your organization is interested in supporting *Reality Check Plus*, if members of your organization are interested in volunteering, or if you would be interested in having someone come speak to members of your organization, please return the enclosed form to Jason Sartori, the project manager for *Reality Check Plus* or contact Jason at jason@realitycheckmaryland.org or 301-405-6793.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope you will become involved in this important statewide effort to envision what Maryland will look like 25 years from now. We also encourage you to learn more about *Reality Check Plus* by visiting our website at www.realitycheckmaryland.org.

Sincerely,

Dru Schmidt-Perkins
1000 Friends of Maryland

Gerrit Knaap
National Center for Smart Growth Research and
Education
University of Maryland

Chris Kurz
Urban Land Institute,
Baltimore District Council

p.s. Please note that all financial donations are tax deductible.

Encl.