

Eastern Shore Facilitator Script

Introductions

Good morning. Welcome to *Reality Check Plus*.

As you heard, today's event is the **first** of four regional growth visioning exercises to be held around the state this spring. The purpose of these events is to develop a citizen-generated, statewide vision for where the growth that is projected to come to Maryland by 2030 should go, where it should *not* go, and to identify the changes that may be necessary to achieve that vision.

My name is _____ and I am the **Facilitator** for this table today. I work for _____ and was drafted as a volunteer Facilitator because _____.

I also would like to introduce _____ who is volunteering today as the **Scribe/Computer Operator** for this event. He/She is _____.

Before I explain more about the overall *Reality Check* effort and the rules of today's exercise specifically, let's go around the table and have everyone introduce themselves by giving:

- (1) Your name,
- (2) Which county you are from,
- (3) What you do for a living and/or what organization or stakeholder interest you represent in the context of today's exercise; and,
- (4) Very briefly describe why you agreed to participate today.

[GO AROUND THE TABLE FOR INTRODUCTIONS]

Goals of the Exercise

The overall goal of *Reality Check Plus* is to help individuals from each region come together to consider where and how to grow within their region in ways that add value to your economy and your communities and also help enhance your quality of life.

To do this, we are going to use plastic blocks to represent the increment of job and household growth projected to come to this region by the year 2030.

You will be given approximately two-and-a-half hours to array these blocks somewhere on the regional map that is before you, deciding where this new growth should go as if you are the “Master Planner” for the region.

Reality Check organizers (the Urban Land Institute, 1000 Friends of Maryland, and the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the University of Maryland) hope this exercise will accomplish four tasks:

- (1) Promote a region-wide and statewide awareness of the level of growth that is coming;
- (2) Encourage participants to recognize the legitimate points of view of different stakeholders;
- (3) Encourage you to envision where or how growth can be accommodated in a more resourceful manner; and,
- (4) Lay the foundation for whatever next steps may be necessary to assure quality growth in this region and in the state for decades to come.

Once these four events have been completed, the University of Maryland will collect and analyze the results and piece them together into a statewide vision for growth. The results will then be discussed at a statewide forum to be held in the fall.

The organizing partners – and stakeholders like you – will begin a process to explore and document “common ground” recommendations that represent a broad consensus. The desire is that new ideas and strategies that represent a statewide vision for growth can be debated and implemented by state and local government.

Let me start, however, with one disclaimer:

Obviously, this is NOT going to be a sophisticated planning exercise. No one is suggesting that a group of laymen from different walks of life can come together for the first time and develop a precise planning document in only three hours by using plastic blocks and a regional map. That will not happen today.

But we believe what will happen is that:

- (1) You will all gain a better understanding of the amount of growth that is coming to this region in the next 25 years;

- (2) You will all develop a better appreciation of the potential effects of that growth on the environment and quality of life of the region; and,
- (3) This exercise will ignite a lasting conversation among all of the represented jurisdictions and interest groups about how to plan together for the schools, roads and other infrastructure that will be necessary to support this anticipated growth.

Today's Agenda

I'm sure you are already brimming with questions, but before I attempt to answer them, let me describe to you, in brief, today's agenda (a copy of which is in your packet):

9:15 to 9:30 a.m.

From now until about **9:30 a.m.**, I will describe how today's exercise will be conducted and the rules we will follow.

9:30 a.m.

At **9:30 a.m.**, we will begin the exercise with a discussion of principles that will guide this table's decisions on where on the map to place the blocks representing growth. I will ask _____ (*scribe*) to record on the big flip chart each of the principles the participants at this table agree upon. These principles should be big-picture ideas about how you believe growth decisions should be made for the region. To be included on the list, the participants at the table must reach a consensus. Once the list is finalized, _____ (*scribe*) will copy it on a small sheet of paper that will be picked up and compared with the principles developed at the other tables.

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

By **9:30 a.m.**, if not before, I will ask you to begin the exercise. You will have two hours.

The first step will be to take the green dry-erase marker and identify any areas on the map that you wish to protect from future development. Again, the group must reach a consensus on these areas before they may be delineated on the map. Again, I will ask _____ (*scribe*) to make a notation of which areas you have put off-limits to future development.

Then, you will be asked to begin placing the Lego® blocks, representing jobs and households, on the table based on your guiding principles. You will

have essentially two hours to place on the map all the Legos representing the growth projected to come to your region by 2030.

11:30 – 12:00 noon

Once all the Legos have been placed, I will ask you to discuss the implications of this growth to your region. I will begin this discussion by asking you to answer a series of three questions. These answers will also be recorded by _____ (*scribe*) and collected and collated by the event organizers. This final exercise may be the most important part of the day.

12 noon to 1:30 p.m.

At 12:00 noon, I will invite all the participants to move to the **Choptank Ballroom** for a networking lunch and then back into this room for a keynote address by **Russ Brinsfield, executive director of the Center for Agro-Ecology and Mayor of the Town of Vienna**. While you are doing that, I will be counting the blocks you played on the map by grid number and _____ (*scribe*) will be recording those decisions in the computer.

1:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Then, around 1:30 p.m., Dr. Gerrit Knaap, director of the National Center for Smart Growth Research at the University of Maryland, will present an analysis of the results from this morning's exercise. This will be followed by a second discussion at each table of the implications of the growth coming to the Eastern Shore.

Are there any questions?

Data for the Exercise

The data that are being used as the basis for this exercise come from a statewide data set collected and maintained by the Maryland Department of Planning. It is based primarily on U.S. Census Bureau statistics and adjustments made at the recommendation of each of the 23 counties and Baltimore City.

The map data are current through the year 2000. That means the map does not include actual development that has occurred since 2000. As a result, there is the potential that you will put new growth in locations that have been either developed or protected since 2000. Those of you with local knowledge can help steer placement of blocks to or away from these areas, if necessary.

For the purpose of this exercise, the projections for population and jobs are not debatable. They represent the best *statewide* set of data available. Once the exercise is over, you are free to discuss whether you think the amount of growth projected to come to the **Eastern Shore** is too large.

Each of you has been given a copy of Participants' Guidebook containing the county-by-county growth projections for the state. Population projections have been converted into "household" projections. So, rather than distributing "population" on the map, we will be placing blocks representing a certain number of housing units that would be required to house the total projected new population.

*To remind you, the growth projections for the **nine-county Eastern Shore region for 2030 are as follows: 86,188 more households and 74,711 more jobs.***

What Individual Blocks Represent

For today's exercise, we will be using blocks of **four** different colors.

Household Blocks:

Households will be represented by **WHITE, YELLOW and/or BLACK** blocks.

WHITE blocks will represent the top 80 percent of new housing units in the region based on price or essentially market-rate housing.

YELLOW blocks will represent the bottom 20 percent of new housing units in the region based on price. This distinction is being made in an attempt to draw attention to the need to provide more affordable housing in different parts of the state.

BLACK blocks are "low density" blocks that can be traded in exchange for **WHITE** blocks. For this exercise, one **WHITE** block equals **four** **BLACK** blocks. As the Facilitator, I will serve as the "banker" to exchange **WHITE** blocks for **BLACK**.

Each table has been given 120 **WHITE** blocks and 30 **YELLOW** blocks. The total of 150 **WHITE** and **YELLOW** blocks represents the 88,166 households projected to come to the region by 2030.

As such, each **WHITE or **YELLOW** block represents 575 households.**

One BLACK block represents 144 households.

Included in your [guidebook beginning on page 32](#) are photographs of what that level of development might actually look like on the ground. (I encourage you to consult regularly with the information in the Guidebook.)

Job Blocks:

Jobs will be represented by BLUE blocks.

Each table has been given 150 total BLUE blocks representing the **74,711** jobs projected to come to the region by 2030.

As such, each BLUE block represents 500 jobs.

It should be noted that all types of jobs are included in this count: full-time, part-time, seasonal, etc.

Included in your guidebook are photographs of what that level of development might actually look like on the ground.

Map Grid Densities:

Each of the blocks you will use will fit on one of the squares within the grid that overlays the map.

Each square is sized to equal 1.2 square miles, or 920 acres. (FYI, one square mile equals 640 acres.)

This means that one WHITE or YELLOW household block representing 575 households per 1.2 square miles would yield a per-acre density of 0.6 households per acre (low density).

A lower density BLACK household block representing 144 households per 1.2 square mile would yield a per-acre density of 0.2 households per acre (very low density).

A BLUE job block representing 500 jobs per 1.2 square mile would yield a per-acre density of 0.5 jobs per acre (low density).

Are there any questions?

CONDUCT:

As we go through this exercise, I will ask you as a group:

- To reach consensus on your actions or decisions;
- To respect everyone's opinion and let everyone who wishes to speak to have an opportunity to weigh in;

You should approach this exercise as if you are unconstrained by current plans or zoning and as if reasonable infrastructure improvements to support your growth decisions are possible.

Your goal is to identify as ideal a development plan as you think is realistically possible to achieve.

I encourage you not to sit near the portion of the map that represents your home county for the entire exercise and to get up and move around to see the map from different vantage points as the exercise progresses.

GEOGRAPHY:

This region consists of **nine** counties: **Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester.**

Even though it is obvious that each of the regions could have included parts of neighboring states – West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia or Delaware – we arbitrarily limited these exercises to the boundaries of the state of Maryland. Similarly, we made some arbitrary decisions about which counties should be in which regions (for example, Frederick County could have been in either the Central Maryland or Western Maryland regions, or Cecil County could have been in the Central Maryland or Eastern Shore regions).

Let me start by identifying some of the major features of this map.

[Facilitators must be familiar not only with the geography of the region, but also with the map's legend and what various colors and markings on the map represent.]

PRIORITY FUNDING and RURAL LEGACY AREAS

Maryland's Smart Growth initiative of 1997 resulted in the designation of areas in which state spending in connection with growth is generally restricted (called Priority Funding Areas, or PFAs) and areas where the state

has made a long-term commitment to help achieve permanent farmland and natural resource protection (called Rural Legacy areas).

These areas are both designated on the map.

PFAs: It is important to note that under the Smart Growth law, new growth is NOT restricted to PFAs, but state financial support for growth projects is restricted to those areas. If a project does not seek or need state financial support and receives local government approval, it may be built outside of PFAs.

Rural Legacy Areas are large areas designated for permanent protection, but which may not be completely protected today. These areas are generally made up of a number of individually owned parcels that are protected one-by-one gradually over time, usually through the sale of development rights (rather than the sale of the property itself).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I would like us now to begin our discussion of Guiding Principles and will ask _____ (*scribe*) to please take notes.

What should be the Guiding Principles for the placement of future growth in this region?

[If asked for an example, you could say, “A ‘Guiding Principle,’ for example, might be to focus new growth in existing urban environments.”]

[As soon as the Guiding Principles have been identified and recorded, you may move the group into the actual exercise. The Scribe should then transfer the principles from the flip chart to a small piece of paper that will be collected.]

EXERCISE

First, does anyone want to take the green marker to identify any places on the map not already identified as protected that should be placed off-limits to growth? To do this, of course, we will need the consensus agreement of the group.

Now, who would like to start by placing the first blocks on the map? Where on the map should we start?

IMPLICATIONS

[ALL BLOCKS SHOULD BE PLAYED BY **11:30 A.M.** ONCE THAT OCCURS AND THE GROUP APPEARS TO BE DONE WITH THE EXERCISE, YOU MAY MOVE INTO A DISCUSSION OF THE IMPLICATIONS.]

Now that you have played all the blocks, I want you to reflect on what this level of growth means to the region and what needs to be done to prepare for it.

To start this conversation, I want to pose three specific questions (and I will again ask _____ *(scribe)* to take notes of your answers):

- (1) *How does this group feel about the amount of growth projected for the region?*

- (2) *Regardless of what policies state or local governments adopt, it is inevitable that some additional growth will occur in this region.*
 - a. *What policies do you think state and local governments should adopt in order to accommodate the additional growth yet maintain the region's quality of life?*
 - b. *What are the implementation tools required to achieve this envisioned growth pattern and maintain or improve quality of life?*

- (3) *Based on your knowledge of the region, what infrastructure improvements would be required to achieve this envisioned growth pattern?*

As a result of this discussion of “implications,” do you now want to revisit the decisions you made in the exercise today and move any of the blocks? If so, why? And, is there consensus to do that?