

What Can Citizens Do to Protect Their Quality of Life? Get Involved!

- ✓ Attend public meetings concerning the Plan.
- ✓ Follow the process in the newspapers and online.
- ✓ Visit www.keepcalvertcountry.com for lots more info.
- ✓ Follow Keep Calvert Country on Facebook for notices of upcoming meetings, recent Letters to the Editor, newspaper articles, and to share your concerns. www.facebook.com/KeepCalvertCountry
- ✓ Email your questions to us: keepcalvertcountry@gmail.com or P&Z staff: Jenny.Plummer-Welker@calvertcountymd.gov
- ✓ Send in your comments and/or speak to the Planning Commission and Commissioners directly. Planning & Zoning email: PZ@calvertcountymd.gov (ask that it be forwarded to the Planning Commission). Commissioners' email: commiss@calvertcountymd.gov
- ✓ Share this pamphlet with fellow Calvert Countians!



Photo Credit: Tamara Ward, The Calvert Recorder

¹Documents marked with an * are available here: <https://goo.gl/kA26et>

WHY ALL THE FUSS ABOUT THE NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The County is currently drafting a new Comprehensive Plan. This pamphlet explains the process of adopting the Plan, the effect it will have on your Quality of Life, and why your participation is important.

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

It is the official policy document that lays out visions^{1*} for the future of the County. All County agencies, including and especially the County Commissioners and Planning Commission, are required by law to base major decisions on consistency with the Plan. ***In other words, it's a BIG deal!***

How Does the Plan Affect Citizens Personally?

Most Calvert Countians would agree we enjoy a high quality of life here. We're surrounded by beautiful waterways that are healthy, our roads are less congested than roads in adjacent counties, and our schools continue to rank among the best in the State.

But how did we achieve such a high Quality of Life? Previous Plans called for the creation of our Town Centers to reduce sprawl and included policies that slowed the growth of the County at a time when it was out of control. Those policies based the amount of growth we could handle on the availability of infrastructure (roads & schools) and the health of our environment.



Produced by Keep Calvert Country

Why Should We Be Concerned About the New Plan?

There are numerous concerns about the new Plan and the process being used to adopt it:

It is being excessively rushed. The Commissioners are determined to adopt the new Plan before the next elections. They are being influenced by a group of developers called the “Small Business Interest Group” (SBIG). In minutes from their meetings*, these developers brag about how they got

Commissioners elected who favor accelerated growth, and how they need to adopt the Plan before a new Board is voted in.

To get the Plan adopted quickly, the Commissioners have not only put pressure on the consultant and staff but have also shortened the amount of time citizens have been given to

participate. The last Plan took 4 years to adopt. Citizens still have not even seen a completed first draft of the Plan and the Commissioners are pushing for its completion **this Spring**. We are not due for an update until 2020.

Unlike previous Plans, the new Plan will not control growth in the County. The last two Plans contained a

“buildout” * policy that would keep the number of households in the County to approximately 37,000. This number was based on what our infrastructure could handle. The “buildout” has been deleted and no new language on growth policies have been added, leaving the door open for greatly increased development.



Traffic has not been adequately studied. Previous Plans have looked at existing and proposed traffic levels and factored them into the growth policies. The consultant working on the new Plan told citizens, “I’m not getting paid to look at traffic”! Anyone who drives Route 4 (don’t we all?) knows it can’t handle the amount of traffic uncontrolled growth would bring*.

Concerns (continued) ...

Get ready for larger Town Centers and sprawl. The Land Use Map* included with the new Plan calls for the following expansions:

Prince Frederick TC	+83%
Owings TC	+59%
Dunkirk TC (see note)	0%
St. Leonard TC	+16%
Huntingtown TC	+45%
Solomons/Lusby TCs	+35%

Additional residential areas are also proposed adjacent to the Town Centers, and the consultant has recommended allowing extension of sewer to these areas so that multi-family housing can be built there.

NOTE: Although the Dunkirk TC is not expanding, the residential area surrounding it will increase by 400 acres (22%). All proposed acreages* are available here: <https://goo.gl/kA26et>

Say good-bye to attractive towns. Do you feel the buildings in our Town Centers are relatively pleasant-looking? Say good-bye to that as well. The new Plan has eliminated any mechanisms for keeping our Towns attractive. The Commissioners have already watered-down appearance standards and have exempted chain stores and restaurants from those regulations.



Our Land Preservation Program will be weakened. Calvert County was the first in the State to initiate a land preservation program back in the '70s. It has been responsible for preserving tens of thousands of forest and farmland, which has helped maintain Calvert’s rural landscape. The policies in the new Plan will weaken the preservation program by giving farmers fewer tools and funding sources to preserve their land.

The “Visions” are just fluff. The first draft of the proposed Plan did not include the “Implementation Section”. This is where citizens can see what actions the County intends to take to achieve the visions. Without goals and objectives, the visions are just pleasant-sounding wishes that may or may not be implemented.

