

HOUSE BILL 240

L6

(PRE-FILED)

6lr0058

CF 6lr0057

By: **Chair, Economic Matters Committee (By Request – Departmental – Planning)**

Requested: September 16, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Local Comprehensive Plans – Guidance Materials and Notification to the**
3 **Department of Planning**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a local planning commission to notify the Department of
5 Planning when beginning the review of the local jurisdiction's comprehensive plan;
6 providing for the development and sharing of certain guidance materials to support
7 the review, revision, or amendment of comprehensive plans; and generally relating
8 to local comprehensive plans.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
10 Article – Land Use
11 Section 1–207(b) and (c)(5)
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2012 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
15 Article – Land Use
16 Section 1–207(c)(4) and (6), 1–208(b)(1), 1–415, 1–416, 1–417(a), 3–301, and 3–303(a)
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2012 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – Land Use**

22 1–207.

23 (b) On or before July 1 of each year, a planning commission shall prepare, adopt,
24 and file an annual report for the previous calendar year with the legislative body.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(c) The annual report shall:

(4) state which local laws or regulations have been adopted or changed to implement the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** in § 1–201 of this subtitle as required under § 1–417 of this title or § 3–303 of this article;

(5) contain the measures and indicators required under § 1–208(c) of this subtitle; and

(6) at least once within the 5–year period after the adoption or review by the local jurisdiction of a comprehensive plan under Part II of Subtitle 4 of this title or under Title 3 of this article, contain a narrative on the implementation status of the comprehensive plan, including:

(i) a summary of the development trends contained in the previous annual reports filed during the period covered by the narrative;

(ii) the status of comprehensive plan implementation tools such as comprehensive rezoning to carry out the provisions of the comprehensive plan;

(iii) identification of any significant changes to existing programs, zoning ordinances, regulations, financing programs, or State requirements necessary to achieve the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** and goals of the comprehensive plan during the remaining planning timeframe;

(iv) identification of any State or federal laws, regulations, or requirements that have impeded local implementation of the comprehensive plan and recommendations to remove any impediments;

(v) future land use challenges and issues; and

(vi) a summary of any potential updates to the comprehensive plan.

1–208.

(b) (1) The General Assembly finds that:

(i) in addition to reporting on past land use indicators and measures, local jurisdictions should strive to achieve future land use goals that implement and achieve the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** in § 1–201 of this subtitle;

(ii) a statewide land use goal that embodies the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** in § 1–201 of this subtitle and smart and sustainable growth should be established;

(iii) the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** in § 1–201 of this subtitle will not be realized unless local jurisdictions set their own goal to make incremental progress towards achieving a statewide land use goal; and

(iv) resources are necessary to achieve a statewide goal, including funding for infrastructure inside the priority funding areas and land preservation outside the priority funding areas.

1–415.

(a) The planning commission of a charter county or code county shall implement the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** set forth in § 1–201 of this title through the comprehensive plan elements required under Part II of this subtitle.

(b) The legislative body of a charter county or code county that has adopted a comprehensive plan under Part II of this subtitle may adopt regulations implementing the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** set forth in § 1–201 of this title in the plan.

1–416.

(a) At least once every 10 years, each planning commission shall review the comprehensive plan and, if necessary, revise or amend the comprehensive plan to include all:

(1) the elements required under Part II of this subtitle; and

(2) the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** set forth in § 1–201 of this title.

(b) The planning commission may prepare comprehensive plans for one or more geographic sections or divisions of the local jurisdiction if the plan for each geographic section or division is reviewed and, if necessary, revised or amended at least once every 10 years.

(C) (1) A PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING WHEN BEGINNING A REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

(2) WITHIN 60 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING A NOTIFICATION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SHALL PROVIDE THE PLANNING COMMISSION WITH GUIDANCE MATERIALS RELATING TO STATE LAWS, BEST PRACTICES FOR LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES THAT MAY SUPPORT THE REVIEW, REVISION, OR AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SHALL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN THE GUIDANCE MATERIALS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION IN

**CONSULTATION WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OFFICES AS THE DEPARTMENT
CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.**

1–417.

(a) At least once every 10 years, which corresponds to the comprehensive plan revision process under § 1–416 of this subtitle, a charter county shall ensure the implementation of the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES**, the development regulations element, and the sensitive areas element of the plan.

3–301.

(a) At least once every 10 years, each planning commission shall review the comprehensive plan and, if necessary, revise or amend the comprehensive plan to include all:

(1) the elements required under Subtitle 1 of this title; and

(2) the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES** set forth in § 1–201 of this article.

(b) The planning commission may prepare comprehensive plans for one or more geographic sections or divisions of the local jurisdiction if the plan for each geographic section or division is reviewed and, if necessary, revised or amended at least once every 10 years.

(C) (1) A PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING WHEN BEGINNING A REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

(2) WITHIN 60 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING A NOTIFICATION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SHALL PROVIDE THE PLANNING COMMISSION WITH GUIDANCE MATERIALS RELATING TO STATE LAWS, BEST PRACTICES FOR LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES THAT MAY SUPPORT THE REVIEW, REVISION, OR AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SHALL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN THE GUIDANCE MATERIALS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION IN CONSULTATION WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OFFICES AS THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE.

3–303.

1 (a) At least once every 10 years, which corresponds to the comprehensive plan
2 revision process under § 3–301 of this subtitle, a local jurisdiction shall ensure the
3 implementation of the [visions] **PLANNING PRINCIPLES**, the development regulations
4 element, and the sensitive areas element of the plan.

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
6 October 1, 2026.