• **How and where we grow**: Howard County continues to experience population growth and by 2040, is projected to have over 371,000 residents. Meanwhile, the County’s supply of undeveloped sites, which are potential locations for new homes and businesses, has dwindled to an estimated 2% of all land in the county. This means that redevelopment may be the primary location for growth in the future. Redevelopment can involve the demolition of existing buildings to make way for new, or the addition of new buildings on lots that already have structures or the re-use of a site like a parking lot.

• **Land preservation and resource conservation**: General Plans look not only at how and where to grow, but also at how we protect and preserve land and natural resources. Currently, an estimated 39% of Howard County is permanently preserved as park land, agricultural land or other permanently preserved open space. Policies for the preservation and conservation of parks, open space, environmental resources, and agricultural land can all be described in the general plan (though plans for these resources are detailed further in the Department of Recreation and Parks’ Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan).

• **Needs for public facilities and infrastructure**: The general plan looks at the impact of population on job growth on infrastructure and neighborhood needs, such as: recreation and community centers, schools, housing, improved transportation systems, parks, etc. While the general plan sets high-level policies for facilities, capital planning is carried out by agencies responsible for implementation.
The HoCo By Design project team recently released the first draft chapter of the General Plan, Dynamic Neighborhoods.

This chapter includes draft housing policies that provide guidance on maintaining and supporting vibrant living that meets the needs of current and future residents and offers opportunities for a more equitable future for all.

Policies in the draft chapter not only discuss the importance of diversifying housing options in the County, but also encourage the development of mixed-use activity centers that are intended to be compact, walkable places with employment, housing, open space and multi-modal transportation connections – which may be of interest to this group.

The Dynamic Neighborhoods chapter is based on the planning themes, that were established early on in the process – planning themes represent some of the key land use challenges and opportunities facing Howard County that can be addressed in a General Plan.

Draft Chapter Release: Dynamic Neighborhoods | HoCo By Design
What's Happening Soon

• In the coming months, goal is to release additional draft chapters related to the four other planning themes which include:
  • Quality by Design – policies relating to community character in new developments, public spaces, and historic communities
  • County in Motion – transportation policies
  • Economic Prosperity – policies relating to job growth
  • Life Outdoors – environmental policies

• Engagement will continue through the end of this calendar year – at which time we intend to release a full draft plan to the public

• It is anticipated that the plan will start the Council adoption process in early 2023.