



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEDIA ADVISORY and **EVENT CREDENTIALING INFO**

Diverse Stakeholders To Convene on Eastern Shore to Develop Consensus on Growth Pressures, Preservation *Participants from Nine Eastern Shore Counties to Attend Eastern Shore Regional Event Slated for Thursday, May 25 in Cambridge*

WHAT: Eastern Shore Regional **Reality Check Plus** Event
▪ Nine Eastern Shore Counties are Focus of May 25 Exercise

WHEN: **Thursday, May 25th at 8:00 AM**
Registration and coffee will begin at 8:00 AM. The **morning exercise**, which is for invited participants only and the media, will last from approximately 8:30 AM until 12 noon and will take place in the Hyatt's Chesapeake Ballrooms. The **afternoon session**, which is open to anyone interested in participating, will begin at 12:15 PM and include a lunch, a keynote presentation by Russell Brinsfield (Mayor of the Town of Vienna and Executive Director of the Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology), a presentation of the morning's results, and a substantive discussion on how to implement the morning's vision. The lunch will be held in the Choptank Ballroom and the remainder of the afternoon session will be in the Chesapeake Ballrooms.

See http://www.realitycheckmaryland.org/easternshore_region_directions.php for event details.

WHERE: **Hyatt Hotel, Cambridge, Maryland**
100 Heron Boulevard at Route 50, in Cambridge. The telephone number is 410-901-1234.

To apply for media credentials, visit http://www.realitycheckmaryland.org/media_center.php.

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Through discourse and negotiation, **Reality Check Plus** participants will propose alternative growth scenarios within their region. Participants will use blocks to help guide their discussions by placing the blocks, which will represent a certain number of new jobs and new residents, on their regional map. Each table of up to 10 participants will be led through a discussion about planning for future growth by a trained facilitator. The exercise is intended to provoke discussion not only about where we grow, but also about how we grow as a region.

The results of this work will serve as the foundation for needed regional and statewide dialogue and future action to accommodate growth in a way that leverages resources, adds value to our communities, and protects and enhances our quality of life. Shortly after the conclusion of the four regional events, **Reality Check Plus** organizers will aggregate and analyze the outcomes of the four exercises in a wrap-up report, which will also include tools, indicators and recommendations for value-added planning on the local and regional levels.

A broad-based coalition of nearly 150 sponsors and supporting organizations is guiding this effort, including the Home Builders Association of Maryland, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Enterprise Community Partners, St. Mary's College, the Citizens Planning and Housing Association, the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the Maryland chapter of the American Planning Association, the Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Greater Baltimore Committee, Westside Renaissance, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, and the Interfaith Housing Alliance, among many others.

A number of other jurisdictions around the country have already launched local or regional visioning exercises – Envision Utah in the Salt Lake City region; Blueprint in Sacramento, California; and Reality Check in Los Angeles, Dallas Ft. Worth and Washington, D.C. What distinguishes **Reality Check Plus** from previous visioning exercises in Maryland is that it is privately led, statewide and action-oriented.

www.realitycheckmaryland.org

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