



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 31, 2006

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MEDIA ADVISORY and **EVENT CREDENTIALING INFO**

Diverse Stakeholders To Convene in Western Maryland to Develop Consensus on Growth Pressures, Affordable Housing Participants from Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington Counties to Attend Western Maryland Regional Event Slated for Friday, June 2 in Hagerstown

WHAT: Western Maryland Regional **Reality Check Plus** Event

- Four Western Maryland Counties are Focus of June 2 Exercise
- Keynote Address by Tom Hylton, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and host of an hour-long public television documentary called *Save Our Land, Save Our Towns*, which has been aired nationwide on more than 100 PBS stations. Hylton is president of Save Our Land, Save Our Towns Inc., a non-profit corporation that is an advocate of traditional towns that house people of all ages, races, and incomes.

WHEN: **Friday, June 2 at 8:00 AM**
Registration and breakfast will begin at 8:00 AM. The morning exercise, which is for invited participants only, will take place in the Athletic, Recreation and Community Center (ARCC), building J on the Hagerstown Community College [campus map](#). Lunch will be held in the ARCC lobby. The afternoon session, which is open to anyone interested in participating, will begin with a keynote address by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Tom Hylton at 1:30 PM and take place in the Kepler Theatre, building M on the [campus map](#).

See http://realitycheckmaryland.org/western_region_directions.php for event details.

WHERE: **Hagerstown Community College, Hagerstown, Maryland**
11400 Robinwood Drive in Hagerstown

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, The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment, the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, The American Institute of Architects - Baltimore, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, the Greater Baltimore Committee, St. Mary's College and the Mid-Shore Community Foundation, 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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