

1000 Friends of Maryland
AMP Creeks Council
Audubon Maryland-DC
Audubon Naturalist Society
Chapman Forest Foundation
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Citizens for a Better Charles County
Clean Water Action
Coalition for Smarter Growth
Conservancy for Charles County
Maryland Bass Nation

Maryland Conservation Council
Maryland Native Plant Society
Mattawoman Watershed Society
Nanjemoy-Potomac Environmental Coalition
Port Tobacco River Conservancy
Potomac River Association
Sierra Club, Maryland Chapter
Sierra Club, Southern Maryland Group
South Hampton HOA
Southern Maryland Audubon Society

September 18, 2013

Charles County Government
Board of County Commissioners
P.O. Box 2150
La Plata, MD 20646

Dear County Commissioners:

It's not too late to put Charles County on the path to an economically and environmentally sustainable future, but doing so will require foresight, courageous leadership, and a willingness to do what's right for the people of the county. As members of the Smarter Growth Alliance for Charles County, we are writing to request that you commission an independent fiscal impact study of the draft comprehensive plan and that you thoughtfully consider the findings before taking action on the plan.

The draft comprehensive plan that you will soon be considering designates much of the rural area of the county – farmland, stream valleys, forests – for rural residential development. The need to evaluate the fiscal impacts of the plan has been raised multiple times by various constituencies.

Serious issues that will have long-term ramifications have been identified. For example, how will the county pay for the public facilities and services that will be required to accommodate continued uncontrolled growth? And how will the county replace the millions of dollars that are generated by the renowned Mattawoman bass fishery when overdevelopment in the watershed destroys this resource?

County residents deserve better than a future marked by increasing taxes and diminished quality of life. The comprehensive plan must take into account basic economic realities.

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Moving forward with the draft comprehensive plan without considering fiscal impacts would be reckless and shortsighted.

Sincerely,

Dru Schmidt-Perkins
Executive Director, 1000 Friends of
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