

Building the Prince George's County We All Dream About

By now I hope you have heard the words: *Envision Prince George's*. Many of you have shown great enthusiasm for this community initiative, already volunteering time and ideas to become "champions," while others may be hearing of it for the first time and want to learn more about just what it means to you, your family, neighbors, and the county. With this inaugural and each subsequent issue of *Behind the Vision*, our hope is that you become more informed and, more importantly, engaged in this exciting opportunity for our community to plan for its future success.



Through both the Parks and Recreation and Planning Departments, our staff is out in the community every day, and we hear a number of concerns and ideas on a consistent basis; not just about planning or parks and recreation, but about the overall quality of life in the county. The inspiration behind *Envision Prince George's* is to collaboratively bring together all facets of our

community—business leaders, residents, and neighbors—and help chart a course for the future direction that WE collectively would like our county to take.

These are times of great challenge in communities across the country, but also of great opportunity. In keeping with M-NCPPC's mission of responsible land use planning and to contribute to quality of life in our county, we want to partner with you to answer questions like:

- What are the challenges and opportunities that exist in the way you view the county today and your view of its future?
- What are you personally willing to do to see that vision become reality?

This is an unparalleled effort, which you can expect to be fully underway later this summer and into the fall. We need you and your energy most. The strength of this countywide vision is that it is built from the ground up...from the viewpoints of the community. It is important that visualizing, dreaming, and planning for our future involve not only government agencies and elected officials—but also a concerned and engaged public.

Envision Prince George's is more than a process, it is a movement.

It is the passion that takes us from ideas and strategies on paper to action that leads to change. I cannot stress enough the importance of your involvement if we are to be successful in achieving and maintaining the world-class position and developing competitive strategies and solutions that will enrich our community.

Commit to our county and to new or continued participation in *Envision Prince George's* in the months to come and the critical steps to implement our shared vision in the years ahead.



Samuel J. Parker, Jr., AICP
Chairman
Prince George's County Planning Board

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Behind the Vision is a newsletter of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's "Envision Prince George's"

Nationally Recognized Nonprofit AmericaSpeaks Joins the *Envision Prince George's* Team

After a vigorous proposal process, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has selected the award-winning nonprofit organization AmericaSpeaks to serve as the lead team advising and supporting the strategy and implementation efforts of the *Envision Prince George's* initiative. The organization's focus is "to reinvigorate American democracy by engaging citizens in the public decision-making that most impacts their lives."

AmericaSpeaks pioneered the concept of the "21st Century Town Hall Meeting," a unique large-scale dialogue engaging hundreds or thousands of interested citizens and residents in public decision-making processes at a time that quickly summarizes public input and priorities. Their previous work demonstrates measurable impacts in the cities and states in which they have

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FLASH

worked, including New Orleans after the devastating hurricanes of 2005 and New York following the attacks of September 11. AmericaSpeaks has also worked closely with the District of Columbia for many years helping administrations engage the public in prioritizing budgets and planning community initiatives.

"Our team is excited about the opportunity to work with Prince George's County in developing a vision that ensures the public has a real and comprehensive voice in charting a course for the next 20 years," says Steve Brigham, Chief Operating Officer for AmericaSpeaks

and project executive for *Envision Prince George's*. The AmericaSpeaks team includes several members who, as residents, have a vested interest in Prince George's County.

Among many outreach activities, including social-networking forums and media partnerships, AmericaSpeaks proposed developing and equipping a large "Ambassador Corps" and Citizen Action Teams to engage residents as part of this effort. AmericaSpeaks will partner with the online technology resources of Fission Strategy to implement key elements of the initiative. The organization also brings to the table grants in technology from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Google, and Support for Disabled Citizens to implement the project's extensive outreach efforts.

To learn more about the capabilities of our partnering firm, visit their web site at www.americaspeaks.org.

VOICES with VISION: Young People Lead by Example

One unprecedented characteristic of *Envision Prince George's* will be its reach within the community—engaging different neighborhoods, lifestyles, ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds and ages. All are important, including young people. Prior to the official launch of *Envision Prince George's* later this summer, M-NCPPC is already working with students to get their ideas for the future of the county.

Students from Parkdale High School had the opportunity to learn from



environmental planners at the Prince George's County Planning Department this past April during a day-long session at the University of Maryland. Ten biology students from the school learned about the local habitat and important factors in its upkeep. They also had the opportunity to use PG-Atlas, a mapping tool useful in viewing

areas and information on land and properties.

The young people shared invaluable feedback on their communities, including concerns about the availability of healthy eating venues and litter in their neighborhoods. They also brainstormed what they can do to be proactive in finding solutions to these challenges.

Community Planning Corner

Conversation Continues as Southern Area of County Develops



As the Planning Department embarks upon *Envision Prince George's*, it also continues the related day-to-day work of managing and planning the land-use resources of the county. The Department is preparing a master plan and sectional map amendment for a large quadrant of land to the southeast of the county, identified as "Subregion 6."

The result of this planning process will be to guide growth in the Developing Tier of the county and promote land preservation in the Rural Tier by establishing guidelines for building a sustainable community. Important issues the plan hopes to address include:

- Land use intensity and compatibility to enhance the quality and character of communities in the area.
- Quality economic development.
- Preservation and protection of environmentally sensitive and scenic lands.
- Efficient use of existing and proposed county infrastructure and investment.

- Strategies for the conservation of rural character and promotion of sustainable development.
- Agricultural/rural district standards.
- Rural/scenic roadway standards.
- Comprehensive planning recommendations and zoning proposals in accordance with the procedures of the Zoning Ordinance.

Public participation is encouraged at every stage of the plan development process and implementation. The project is expected to receive approval from the Prince George's County Council in late July 2009. Please visit www.pgplanning.org for more information about this plan or others in the county.

Department of Parks and Recreation Plans for 2010 and Beyond

As part of the broader *Envision Prince George's* initiative, Parks and Recreation: *2010 and Beyond* is a community needs assessment project launched in 2008 that is focused on identifying needs for parks, open space, trails, recreation programs, and leisure services.

Last spring, the Department of Parks and Recreation held a series of public meetings throughout the county to help identify and prioritize these needs—now and for the future. The Department also conducted a survey of residents, with results of both informing the development of a strategic plan for implementation by the county's nationally renowned parks and recreation system.

The resulting priorities and plans based on the extensive community input received, as well as the opportunity for further public comment, will be available during a series of public meetings to be held throughout the county in **July 2009**.

Please visit www.2010Beyond.com for more details on the survey results and for the dates and locations of the July meetings.

SPOTLIGHT

Soaring to Higher Heights



Did you know that the official bird of the county is the Eastern Bluebird? The *Envision Prince George's* logo design features a representation of this bird, which often flies in groups of threes. The colors, you may also recognize, are those of the official Prince George's county seal.

Together, these concepts represent the **diversity, forward movement, hope, and spirit of cooperation** that will make *Envision Prince George's* a success and take our county into an unprecedented future of bright ideas and possibilities!

There are many ways to get involved in *Envision Prince George's....*

- Help spread the word about *Envision* to others in your network and neighborhood.
- Participate in training and leading collaborative dialogues to gather community input.
 - Host a facilitated discussion in your office, home, or community.
 - Offer expertise in an area of need.
- Share your vision for the county's future at an upcoming event or forum.



Inspiring Young Adults to Action Envision Prince George's Young Adult Outreach

Saturday, July 11, 2009

9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Prince George's Sports and
Learning Complex

8001 Sheriff Road
Landover, Maryland 20785

With a growing population of young adults, it is increasingly important to engage voices that add a special dynamic to any conversation on quality of life and the county's present and future success.

The faith community is one channel to help reach the young adult population of Prince George's County. Ministers to young adults are invited to help us brainstorm action steps to effectively involve the faith and young adult communities.

RSVP to e-news@ppd.mncppc.org or 301-952-3594 by Tuesday, June 30, 2009.

Prince George's Municipal Officials Envision Prince George's Engagement Breakfast and Workshop

Saturday, October 3, 2009

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Department of Parks and
Recreation Auditorium

6600 Kenilworth Avenue
Riverdale, MD 20737

Elected and appointed officials are an important catalyst in the success of this communitywide call to action to define the future of our world-class county and the towns and communities that make it the rich, vibrant place we call home. Join us as municipal officials *Envision Prince George's* and offer input on achieving and sustaining a world-class economy.

RSVP to e-news@ppd.mncppc.org or 301-952-3594 by Wednesday, July 1, 2009.

Creative Dialogue: Envision Prince George's County, 2010 and Beyond

Monday, October 5, 2009

7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

University of Maryland Clarice
Smith Center Laboratory Theatre
College Park, MD 20742

AmericaSpeaks leads this community workshop at the Clarice Smith Center in collaboration with The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. This workshop will challenge the artistic community to join community leaders as we ask ourselves: What is the culture of Prince George's County? What image comes to mind when we think of the county? What image do we want people to have of Prince George's County? What are the major opportunity gaps? What is necessary to transform into a creative economy? What is the role of the arts and broader community in the future of Prince George's County, 2010 and Beyond?

Please contact Nicole Paoletti, Assistant Manager, Cultural Participation at 301-405-5974 or visit the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center online at www.claricesmithcenter.umd.edu.

For information on these events or any other program information, please contact The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department at 301-952-3594 or e-news@ppd.mncppc.org. Visit us online at www.mncppc.org/Envision.