



Maryland Department of Planning Operating Budget Question Responses

Issues

Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Spending Plan and Economic Impact Study

1. *The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends that MDP comment on why the report on a MHAA Financing Fund spending plan was not provided with the fiscal 2020 budget submission. In addition, DLS recommends that MDP comment on the requirements for and status of the RFP for a program and economic impact study for the Maryland Heritage Areas.*

Planning Response: The MHAA Financing Fund has now been submitted. The RFP is with the Department of Budget and Management and is expected to be posted on eMaryland Marketplace by the end of this week.

Reinvest Maryland Will Be an Integral Part of the State Development Plan but Has No Metrics

1. *DLS recommends that MDP comment on what metrics are appropriate for measuring reinvestment progress; whether the number of vacant parcels within previously built areas, current zoning, and tax base information could be used to derive baselines for infill, redevelopment, and revitalization; and what actions the State will take to influence these metrics.*

Planning Response: Reinvest Maryland is a toolkit that features programs and best practices that communities may use in the revitalization of their area through featured success stories across the state. The goal of Reinvest Maryland to provide a resource of programs and services to consider when revitalizing a given community. Individual programs featured within Reinvest Maryland may collect their own metrics, but there are no general metrics for Reinvest Maryland.

2020 Census Outreach Efforts Well-funded in Fiscal 2020

1. *DLS recommends that MDP comment on the synergy between the 2020 Census Grant Program dedicated to matching grants for targeted efforts by nonprofits and local governments and its own statewide census outreach efforts.*

Planning Response: The 2020 Census Grant Panel is tasked with providing matching grants to local jurisdictions and non-profit organizations for their census outreach. Funding by the Grant Panel is predicated on a local jurisdiction or a non-profit organization's ability to develop an outreach plan and provide matching funds. Applications will be reviewed and awarded by the Census Grant Panel by April 1, 2019. Successful applicants will be awarded funding beginning July 1, 2019. It is anticipated that this panel may be focusing on projected low-response areas.

The Department of Planning's responsibility is to ensure a complete count of all people in Maryland, as it is the official liaison to the U.S. Census Bureau and houses the State Data Center. Planning's outreach strategy must take a holistic approach to the entire state. Planning is focusing on increasing state-wide response rates. While Planning and the Census Grant Panel seek to accomplish the same goal, which is a complete count of all people in Maryland, the two programs complement each other and support the most complete count possible, particularly considering the significant challenges facing the 2020 census.

Planning's census outreach will seek to position Maryland to maintain and increase census participation rates by communicating the importance of census to all the state's 24 jurisdictions, the long-term benefits of a full and accurate count, and the use of funds strategically to engage higher return rate areas to further increase participation. Planning will work to effectively engage higher performing areas with some marketing support for census and thus, better positioning the state to absorb potential decreases in the return rates of Low Response Score populations. This will allow for the coordination and operational planning of Planning, the U.S. Census Bureau, local government leadership, non-profit and business organizations, schools, and providers to overcome challenges and maintain or increase participation from Low Response Score communities.

Planning's census outreach funding will be used to complement and enhance the grant awards and fill funding gaps across the state to achieve an increased participation rate statewide. It will be managed by an experienced director that has developed, managed, and implemented statewide and targeted messaging campaigns. The general fund allocation will be used to develop the Maryland census outreach campaign and advertise it among the public through both traditional and non-traditional/social media applications. The state's diverse populations will require that we provide translation services for residents and communicate with messaging among culturally-diverse avenues and audiences (WeChat, Whatsapp, SMS text, foreign-language publications, trade publications, etc.).

Planning is not expecting the U.S. Census Bureau will provide printed collateral materials such as brochures and flyers, therefore Planning's budget allocation will provide the printing needs for the state. Finally, because Planning's census outreach requires talking to residents where they are, travel, training, and meeting and conference registration funds are included in the Fiscal Year 2020 budget.

Staffing Shortage Shifts Maryland Historical Trust's (MHT) Historic Easement Program Policies

- 1. DLS recommends that MHT comment on whether the shift from perpetual to term historic easements, along with other historic preservation tools, allows Maryland to secure its heritage and if not, then why MHT has not reclassified or transferred existing vacant positions or asked for new positions.***

Planning Response: MHT's shift from perpetual to term easements, while not ideal, is consistent with the approach to historic preservation easements that a majority of state historic preservation offices currently undertake. This change in practice will still permit MHT to protect historic properties that receive funding support from the state for a significant period in so far as the minimum easement term will be 15 years and most are expected to exceed that minimum due to the grant award amounts that are typically sought.

MHT has not reclassified or transferred existing vacant positions as they perform essential job duties that cannot otherwise be reassigned.

Several Annual Reports Required in Statute Have Not Been Submitted

- 1. DLS recommends that MDP comment on why these annual reports have not been submitted.***

Planning Response: These reports are under review and will be submitted as soon as possible.

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

- 1. Adopt the following narrative:***

Census Outreach Efforts Report: The fiscal 2020 budget includes \$5.0 million in general funds for the 2020 Census Grant Program created by Chapter 18 of 2018 (2020 Census Grant Program – Establishment and Funding) and an additional \$1.0 million for the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) to conduct statewide outreach on census preparation. The committees are concerned that there is a substantial amount of funding for the two programs that may be duplicative and that there is a lack of specificity on how the \$1.0 million in outreach program funding will be managed by MDP. Therefore, the committees request that MDP submit a report on both the 2020 Census Grant Program and the MDP outreach program. The report shall include the following:

- **2020 Census Grant Program:** *the number of applicants, the amount of funding requested, the criteria under which projects were chosen, the number of applicants awarded funding, the amount of funding allocated, and the estimated outcomes from the projects selected for funding in terms of outreach to hard-to-count communities; and*
- **MDP Outreach Program:** *the types of outreach conducted, the amount of funding expended for each type of outreach, and the expected outcomes from the outreach conducted in terms of outreach to hard-to-count communities.*

The report is requested to be submitted with the fiscal 2021 budget submission.

Planning Response: Accept.