

Envision Greater Washington

Moving Our Region Forward. Together. Now.



RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE:

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments | Greater Washington Board of Trade | Community Foundation for the National Capital Region

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Moving Our Region Forward. Together. Now.

Our region will grow dramatically in the next 25 years – enough people to create two more Montgomery Counties, four more Districts of Columbia or almost six Prince William Counties. With 2 million more people and 1.6 million new jobs will come relentless pressure to significantly expand the region’s footprint. This expansion will put enormous stress on all our public resources and pose an unwelcome threat to the quality of life as we know it today.

For example, we will likely experience:

- More traffic on an already-overburdened road network and aging transit system, and an enormously frustrating loss of time to families and workplaces alike.
- Increased degradation of our air, water and recreational resources.
- Relentless pressure to increase state and local taxes to support additional roads and transit, public schools, utilities and other services for a growing population.
- Persistent and potentially increasing concentrations of poverty, creating unwelcome economic, workforce, educational and tax consequences.
- Spiraling housing costs, making it more difficult for our children and grandchildren to participate in the American dream, creating recruitment challenges for employers and aggravating race and class inequity.

This picture of the future does not have to come true. But unless we act now, it may, for every item above reflects current trendlines. Growth is always a double-edged sword, and raises important questions for leadership in the Greater Washington region:

As we grow, will we pull together or pull apart? What is the price tag, in loss of family time, cost of doing business and increased taxes, in continuing to grow as we are today? Are we prepared to spend what will be needed for transportation, schools and other public services if our region continues to spread? Do we have the right regional systems for making

the right decisions to ensure the future health of our Region? Perhaps most importantly, are we doing everything we can to provide our children, grandchildren and new neighbors with a place they will not only want to call home but can afford to make their home?

Calling the Question

In February 2006, more than 140 regional leaders attending the Potomac Conference recommended that leading regional organizations consider a visioning initiative focused on how the region should grow over the coming decades. In April 2006, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Greater Washington Board of Trade and The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region endorsed a 90-day exploratory effort to examine whether a regional visioning initiative should be launched and how it might work.

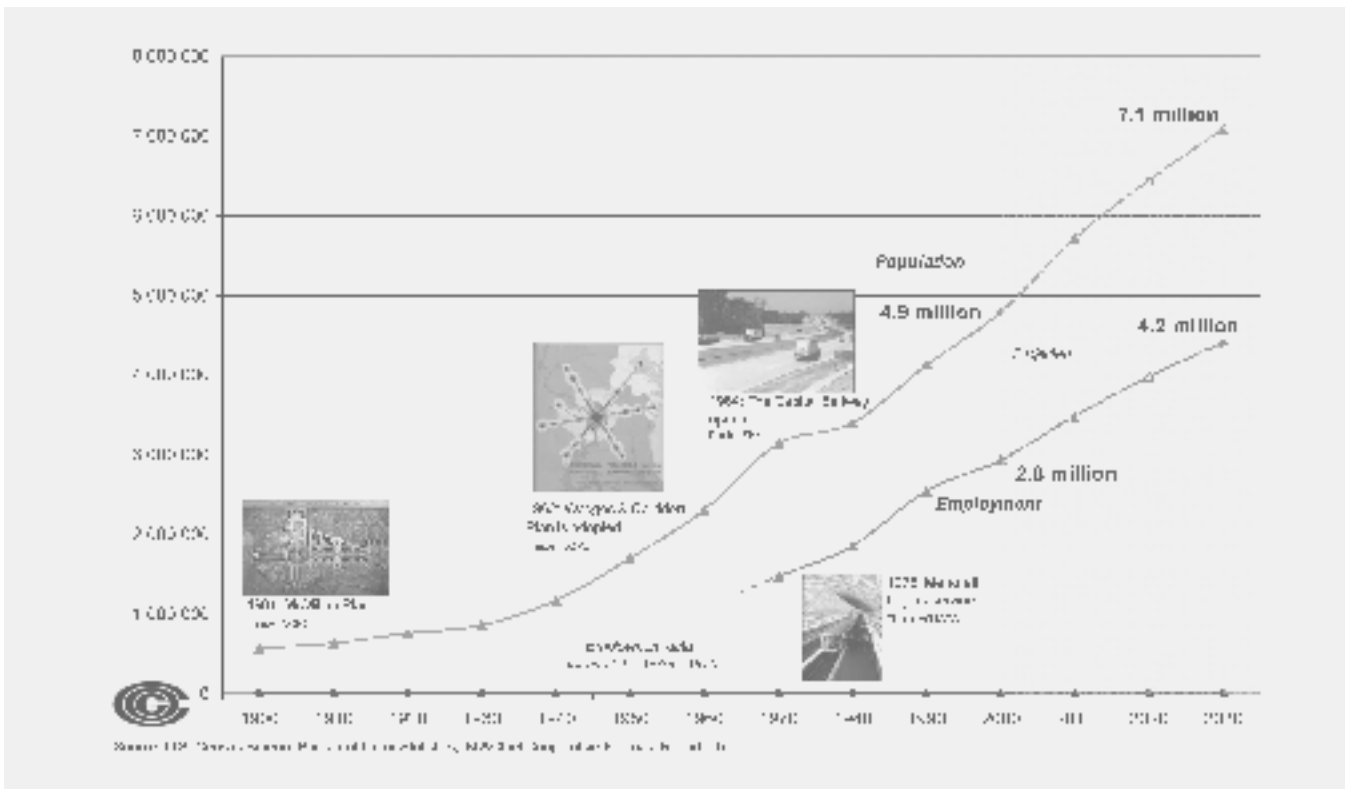
This document reflects the recommendations of the exploratory effort – the work of more than 50 business, elected, civic, religious and nonprofit leaders (“Organizing Committee”) that met in four plenary sessions and several work group sessions.

PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATION

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That a collaborative, diverse, multi-sector partnership of regional leaders and leading organizations pursue a sustained state-of-the-art, community-wide regional visioning initiative that focuses on establishing goals to guide where and how our region will grow in the coming decades and that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Greater Washington Board of Trade and The Community

Historic and Forecast Population and Employment Growth



Foundation for the National Capital Region take a leading role in its successful launch and implementation.

In making this recommendation, the Organizing Committee is mindful of the concern that process-oriented sessions can lead to meetings without action, an unacceptable result. The proposed approach will be based on data and real choices, and will insist that hard decisions be made. It will focus on action, implementation and results.

The proposed initiative would do the following:

- **Maintain a focus on implementation and action.** From the start, this effort should seek opportunities to act and ensure that the major consensus decisions lead to action. Furthermore, strategies developed to improve quality of life will require commitments by all the sectors – government, business and nonprofit, as well as individuals – to alter their behaviors to align with directions set through the visioning process.
- **Place a premium on transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.** These fundamentals, the core of successful collaborative efforts, are often missed, leading to situations in which many residents and key players do not support

or commit to action. Unfortunately, this has happened too many times in our region, especially within low-income communities and among people of color, leading to a profound distrust of all planning efforts. In order for this effort to be successful, organizations and ordinary residents representing the full diversity of our region must be engaged. There are no shortcuts to this work and without a full commitment of time and effort, our goals cannot be achieved.

- **Work from community values.** Sometimes it is difficult for persons with differing views to even talk about the toughest issues. Values research – in-depth structured conversations with residents – helps identify common values and vocabulary that create a productive, deliberative environment.
- **Use scenarios.** Articulating alternative possible futures, with realistic trade-offs, through the use of scenarios is a disciplined method for thinking and making choices about the future. Successful regional initiatives have used scenarios to help community leaders and residents understand their strategic options, the effects on local neighborhoods and the implications and consequences of making final choices. We need to do the same.

- **Recognize the interconnectedness of issues, including the roles of race and class.** Everything is linked. We cannot talk about transportation without considering land use. We cannot talk about land use without talking about economic development, and so on. Further, it is impossible to work on any significant regional issues without examining the roles of race and class. The unbalanced growth in our region did not happen by chance. Historical decisions about development and public investments have negatively impacted distinct groups – usually low-income communities and people of color – and the legacy of those historic decisions produce a drag on our economy and distort current growth patterns. This initiative will need to understand and demonstrate how these issues relate to one another, and how our growth can produce an efficient use of infrastructure and ensure greater opportunity throughout our region.
- **Reach beyond the usual participants and ensure constructive meetings.** Too many times, community leaders largely know who will attend a given meeting. They have also seen too many meetings go awry. This initiative must reach and engage a wide range of residents and stakeholders in constructive conversations. Good meetings – small, medium and large – with many new participants should be one hallmark of this effort.
- **Recognize and respect local, state and federal roles and decisions.** Our jurisdictional landscape of towns, cities, counties, states and the District of Columbia is often blamed for making regional work difficult. We believe it is also a strength. From Richmond to Baltimore we have, in many ways, a shared future. The federal government will remain the largest employer, and recent locational decisions driven by security concerns will influence the directions of growth. We seek the full participation of localities, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia and the federal government in this effort, while recognizing that in addition to an active public sector role, private, nonprofit and individual actions are also keys to success.
- **Embrace all sectors as partners.** The strength of this effort, we believe, lies in its multi-sector basis: public, private, nonprofit and civic. Each sector is unique and central to our success. At the same time, to stimulate widespread engagement and action, the effort’s clear benefits for individuals and families in our region must be communicated consistently.

Project Results

If this effort were a “done deal,” it is here that we would outline the intended results. However, it is the work of the participants that will guide the direction of this effort. At the same time, this effort will have a focus, looking at how and where we grow. This effort will turn a clear eye toward ensuring that we grow in a way that improves the long-term competitiveness of our region and creates opportunities for all residents to enjoy a strong quality of life.

In addition to the results one might see and touch, we believe this effort can achieve a number of other outcomes:

- Increased regional competitiveness and a stronger partnership between the Virginia, Maryland, District of Columbia and federal governments to achieve greatness for our national capital region
- Greater capacity for regional action by elected, business, nonprofit and other leaders
- Clear direction from the public about how to balance the realities of our continued growth with a vision for our future
- A stronger regional identity, including an articulation of our shared values
- Deeper understanding of the effects of regional economic and social “divides” on our economy, quality of life and growth
- Increased civic engagement among all residents, including new forums and vocabulary, to address the challenges and opportunities of our changing demographics

It is these outcomes that will increase and sustain our regional capacity for action.

* * *

The remainder of this document explains our work, describes regional visioning in more detail and amplifies these recommendations.

Building our Momentum

Recognizing our History



Regional visioning and planning is not new to our region. We are building on work from L'Enfant to McMillan to Metro and want to take it to the next level. There is also more recent work. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments has led efforts in the past 15 years that have focused on its areas of responsibility. These efforts have been influential in shaping the region's thinking about transportation and, to a lesser extent, land use. Our regional challenges,

however, have not dissipated. In fact, most have become more profound. And they extend beyond transportation and land use.

That recognition has stimulated more recent, multi-sector conversations to examine what is needed for our region. They not only build upon longstanding work by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, but that of the conservation community, and work within various organizations and sectors to understand trends and promote a better regional future.

- In February 2005, ULI Washington and the Washington Smart Growth Alliance (SGA) (which includes the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Coalition for Smarter Growth, Enterprise Community Partners, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the Metropolitan Washington Builder's Council and Urban Land Institute-Washington) sponsored Reality Check, a one-day "visioning" exercise designed to allow 300 of the region's public, private and nonprofit leaders the opportunity to experience firsthand the challenge of how to accommodate projected growth in the region. At this diverse gathering, there was broad agreement that – among other things – natural areas should be preserved, growth between east and west should be better balanced, and a more proactive, sustained visioning and action-oriented regional initiative was needed. Leaders of Reality Check asked Potomac Conference leadership to consider how to turn this awareness into action.





Reality Check Participants

- At the 2006 Potomac Conference, more than 140 leaders from the public, private and nonprofit sectors considered questions about growth and our regional quality of life. Once again, there was widespread agreement that current patterns of growth were not sustainable over time, and the participants concluded that the region would benefit from a visioning initiative that includes many stakeholders and meaningfully involves the public in planning. This group recommended that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, and The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region consider such an initiative.
- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, and The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region endorsed that view in March/April and convened a 50-person Organizing Committee and a 90-day Phase 1 consideration of whether to convene a regional visioning process, and if so, how.

It is this emerging consensus on the need for action that led to our efforts, laid the foundation for our work and, indeed, will propel forward a multi-sectoral regional visioning process.

Understanding the Urgency

Trends and Data

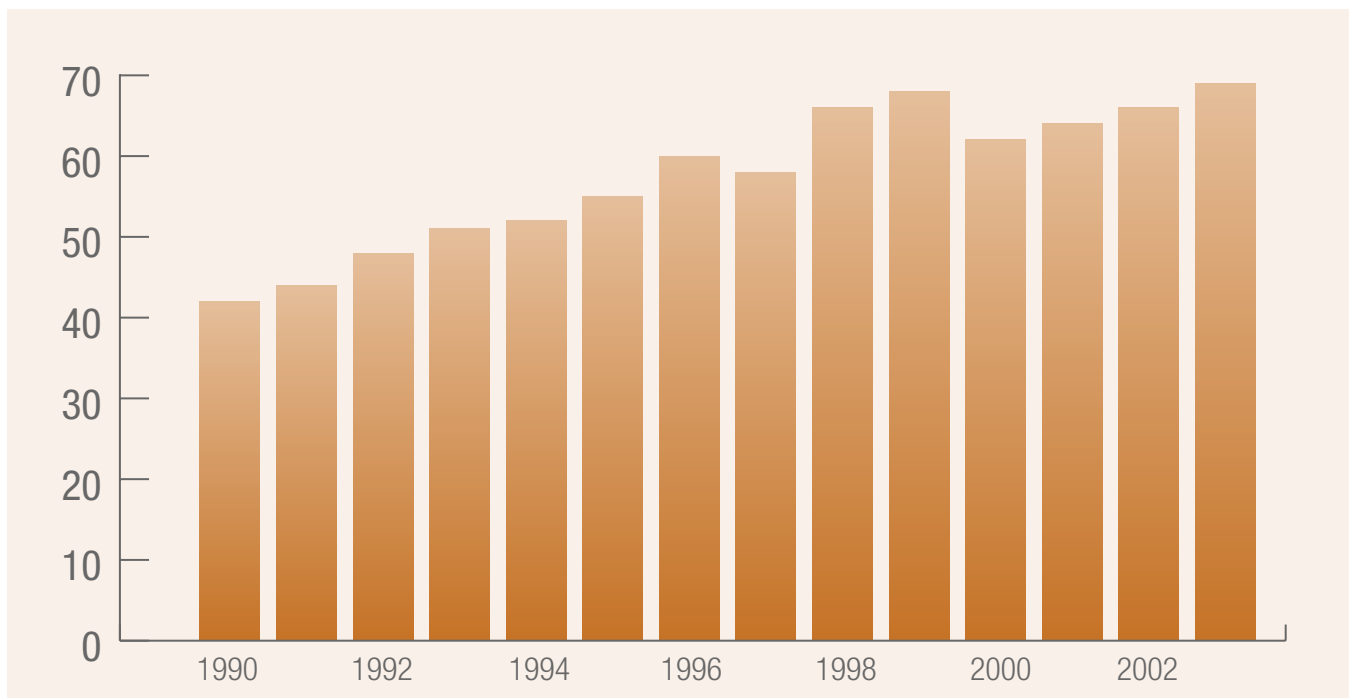
The Washington, D.C., region, by almost any measure, is among the most prosperous in the country. But regions change. One need only look at regions in the Northeast that in another era were once among the nation's most prosperous to know that regional fortunes can change.

And we will be changing in other ways, regardless of our prosperity. The number of residents in the region aged 65 years and older is expected to double between 2000 and 2030. Immigration will continue to bring new workers and entrepreneurs, not only to downtowns but to suburban neighborhoods. Within 10 years, most predict we will become a "majority minority" region, with more people of color than whites.

In addition to demographic changes, trendlines on important quality of life measures are not headed in the right direction. In fact, the warning signs of inaction and inertia are ominous.

- **Traffic growing worse ...** We already have the nation's third worst traffic congestion, and several studies have concluded that – absent significant changes – most of our major transportation corridors will be at gridlock by 2030. In fact, those who study our region's transportation and land use challenges reach the same conclusion: business as usual will only get us more gridlock. This, combined with the fact that our hugely popular but aging transit system does not have a dedicated funding source for ongoing maintenance and replacement capital needs, let alone major improvements, makes prospects for improvement poor.

Annual Hours of Delay Per Peak Hour Traveler



Source: 2005 Urban Mobility Report, Texas Transportation Institute

- **Housing growing prohibitively expensive ...** The National Association of Realtors says home prices have gone up almost 170% since 2000 for core jurisdictions in our region. Housing affordable to low-income and middle-class families is becoming scarcer. George Mason University research found that we had a shortfall in these two categories of 43,200 housing units in 2003, and that number will grow to 218,000 by 2025. Failure to change these trends will continue to price more and more families out of the market, challenging employers who seek qualified workers and accelerating our sprawl even further. Rising energy prices will only add to the financial burden of building housing further away from job locations.
- **Open space disappearing ...** We are losing 16,000 to 28,000 acres to development each year. That is 25 to 40 square miles, an area half the size of the District of Columbia – every year. A 2001 study by the University of Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation estimates that if current trends in land use continue, more than 800,000 acres of new land will be developed in the next 20 years.
- **Poverty increasing ...** Like other parts of America, we're becoming a region of haves and have-nots, with a shrinking middle class that is a critical piece of community structure and tax base. Poverty cuts across all age groups and all household types in the region. While the majority of people living in poverty are under 65 years old, nearly one in 10 persons in poverty are elderly. More than one-quarter of people in poverty in the Washington region are married

couples. In Fairfax County, for example, married couples account for 45 percent of people living in poverty. These increasing inequalities negatively impact our prospects for growth and our quality of life in numerous ways.

- **Jobs and affordable housing separating ...** larger numbers of affordable housing opportunities tend to be in the eastern part of our region while the largest job growth tends to be in the western suburbs. One result of this is increasing congestion, with heavy east-to-west commuting in the morning and a reverse in the evening that, over time, will increasingly contribute to gridlock.
- **Public school systems facing growing strains ...** Our school systems are our “generators” of opportunity and our region’s workforce. But explosive growth and widening achievement gaps are straining their resources and threatening their ability to keep pace. Development patterns greatly influence education funding, which in turn links directly with performance and our quality of life and competitiveness.

Those observations are only the headlines. A regional visioning initiative will not tackle every issue. It will, however, give the region a powerful tool to develop a focused agenda and work toward action. In the future, we should not look back at this time of prosperity and say, “We should have ...”

Regional Visioning

Visioning, Campaign, and Action

It is said that we are organized to solve problems and make decisions on local, state and federal levels, yet many of our most significant challenges are at the neighborhood, regional and global levels. Regional visioning is a name for a wide variety of regional problem-solving efforts that bring leaders together across jurisdictional and sector boundaries to address issues that recognize no boundaries.



One of the characteristics of any region is that no one group can make decisions effecting regional action. Prince George's County cannot decide for Fairfax County. The Fairfax Chamber of Commerce cannot decide for the Montgomery Chamber, and so on. Effective regional problem-solving brings together governmental, business and nonprofit organizations and residents to gain a better understanding of the issues, decide together about a desired future and move to action. And the action is shared by all; it is through the joint action that real change happens.

The first wave of regional visioning occurred in the early 1980s, where places as diverse as Newark, Savannah, Phoenix, Chattanooga and Roanoke embarked on significant regional visioning processes that left positive lasting marks. Many imitators followed, some successful, some not.

Starting with Envision Utah, in 1995, another wave of regional visioning efforts flowed. These efforts were more sophisticated in every way – civic engagement, consensus building, scenario development, use of technology and, most significantly, their impact. One change that became apparent in the newer approaches was that these efforts were not just about building a shared vision; they also developed into campaigns for regional change. John Parr, former president of the Alliance for Regional Stewardship, one of the nation's leading expert organizations on the practice of regional problem-solving, puts it this way:

First and foremost, visioning efforts should not be considered planning initiatives but campaigns for change. Ultimately, successful visions require significant change in the way large numbers of people think about their regions and in how they act in their everyday lives. They might begin to use alternative modes of transportation. They might begin to realize how important it is to have housing choices to accommodate all stages of the human life cycle. They might understand the necessity for increasing the availability of affordable housing in their neighborhoods. Visioning enables people to understand and exercise their choices on a large scale, and this requires broad outreach and engagement as well as sophisticated marketing of ideas that is more typical of political, marketing and fundraising campaigns than of planning initiatives.

The effort we propose will have elements of both a visioning process and a campaign, ensuring our efforts lead to implementation and action.

London, Singapore, Berlin, Sydney and Paris

Regional visioning is not just a U.S. phenomenon, it is global. Major urban centers across the globe are using regional visioning to work on local challenges, economic alignment, social problems, sustainable development and global competitiveness.

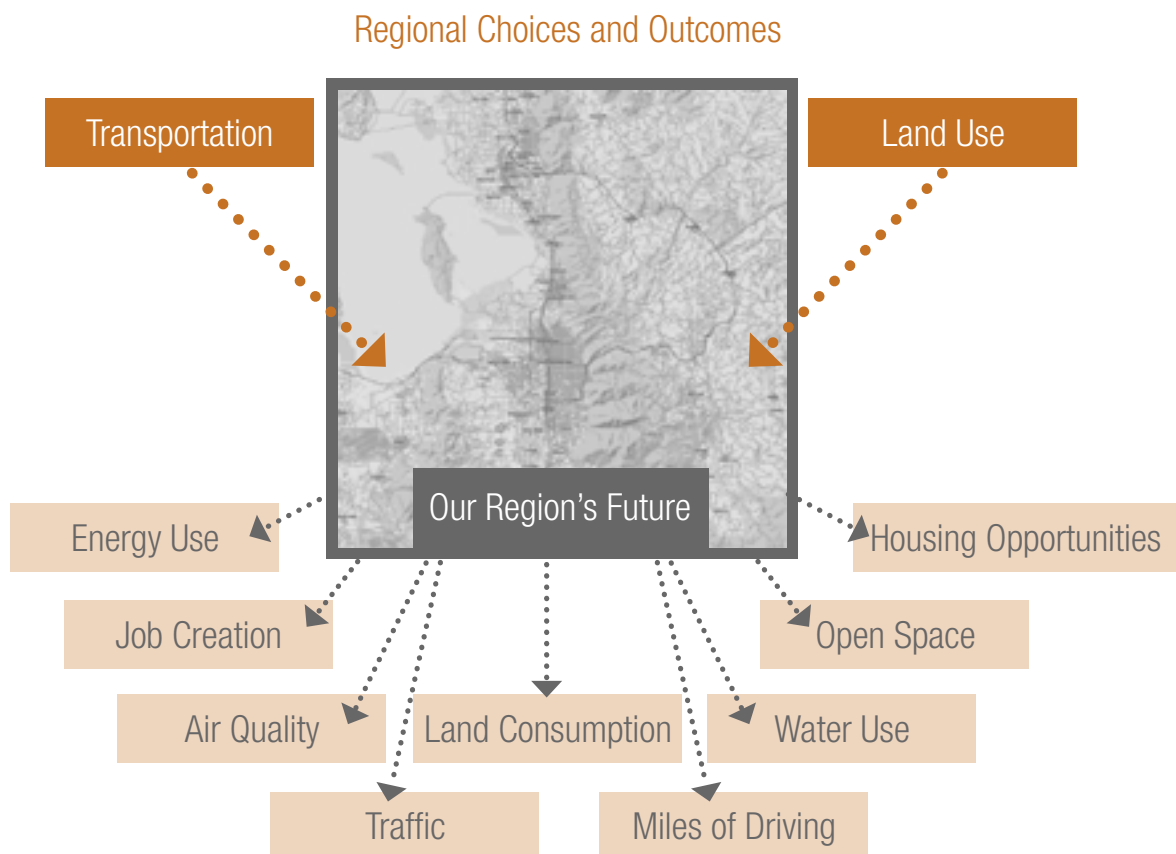
These efforts recognized the changing global economic landscape. The Washington region competes not only with Los Angeles, New York and other urban centers in the United States; we compete with Bangalore, Singapore and other regions around the world. Regional visioning is not just about coming together as a region for our own sake, it is a vital component of a global competitiveness strategy.

Why are Scenarios so Important?

Scenarios capture future possibilities. They are used for strategic planning by multinational corporations, resolving international conflict, economic development planning and regional visioning. “Good” scenario planning describes real

choices, imagines possible future conditions and then explores the implications. What if oil prices continue to climb? What are the social and economic impacts of our becoming a majority-minority region? What would happen if job growth was dramatically increased in the eastern part of the region? How might we better connect Baltimore, Washington and Richmond to expand the regional economy, increase housing choices and accelerate job growth?

Scenarios are created through conversations with stakeholders, explorations with demographers and forecasters and analysis of current data and trends, and then injected with some creativity. Scenarios present alternative, realistic paths for future growth that demonstrate the implications for neighborhoods, businesses, taxes, economic productivity, educational outcomes and numerous other variables, depending on the path chosen. For example, in Salt Lake City, environmentalists and other stakeholders helped create a scenario with very compact development patterns, believing that this scenario would improve air quality. Analysis found that because of the mountains and air patterns, the most compact form of development would actually increase air pollution. This finding helped generate consensus on another scenario.



Source: Envision Utah

How Does a Regional Visioning Process Work?

Regional initiatives during the past decade have produced a set of key characteristics for successful results-producing efforts:

Successful Efforts take time. There are many moving parts in a region; pulling them together takes time. Successful visioning processes also take time, but it is time well-spent because it not only leads to a shared vision and action, it also helps a region build its capacity to think and act regionally, a core competence in today's global world.

Successful regional visioning processes conduct extensive outreach and hold productive meetings. Across the country, too many public meetings are hijacked by those with axes to grind and “average folks” can rarely make their voices heard. Regional visioning efforts engage thousands of residents – through meetings, surveys, interviews, focus groups, web sites and other means. When managed properly, the process stimulates inclusion: Voices that frequently aren't at the table have an opportunity to be heard and counted. They mix small meetings in different places to reach people where they are and large meetings that bring people together from across the region.

When effective civic engagement and scenarios come together, progress can happen. Civic engagement, without a constructive structure, often produces wish lists, not the good analysis that leads to hard choices. When scenarios are intertwined with an effective civic engagement process, the meetings become more productive. Learning about scenarios is learning about the region and its possible choices.

Talking not about the “latest project” but about alternative realistic future scenarios forces conversations away from “no change” to “what kind of change do we want as a community?” Conversation, then, can lead to priority setting and decisions.

Campaign-like strategies using media, Internet, viral marketing, micro-targeting and good old-fashioned community organizing pierce the information overload. Creating one good meeting about scenarios, or even one hundred, will likely not lead to change because meetings often fly under the radar screen, invisible to all but the professionals. In order for regional initiatives to succeed, they must become visible across the region, in all of its diversity. That is the notion of a campaign, using marketing strategies, technology and personal contact to gain a visible place in the civic arena. That work is challenging but essential, for without the visibility, it is hard for any process to gain enough legitimacy and standing so that conversation leads to action.

Current technology makes it easier and better. Imagine starting a regional initiative without email. Technology provides the communications infrastructure for regional initiatives. Perhaps, more importantly, innovative uses of technology allow groups to actually “see” what different future choices look like at the regional, city and neighborhood scales. Some applications, for example, allow possible futures to be overlaid on actual satellite images, showing the scope and scale of future development. Others allow different patterns of development to be visualized. Technology is critical to supporting effective deliberation.

“Emerging problems with traffic and housing threaten to erode the very quality of place that brought people, companies and jobs here... Here's where the creative thinking comes in. When a region reaches the point at which Greater Washington is today, it must develop differently if it wants to continue to grow.”

Richard Florida, author of “The Rise of the Creative Class,” from a May 7, 2006 *Washington Post* Op-Ed

Does It Really Produce Results?

The most successful visioning efforts have led to real breakthroughs in regional collaboration and action. There are no guarantees – except “nothing ventured, nothing gained” – but metropolitan areas around the country have taken specific actions that have led to fundamental change:

- **In Chicago**, the mismatch between affordable housing and jobs was obvious after the city’s Metropolis 2020 effort. To combat this trend, more than 120 business leaders publicly signed a pledge to make access to affordable housing and public transit a significant factor when making business location decisions. This has led to action by businesses, action by local governments to support businesses and most recently, a new state program to support this effort.
- **In Los Angeles**, the organizers of Southern California’s Compass initiative came up with a clever way to show how small local changes can have large regional impacts. Their analysis concluded that only 2 percent of the land use in the region had to change for the entire area to reap significant transportation and environmental benefits. Implementation of the “2% Strategy” began in 2005. In spring 2006, using a combination of state and local funds, Southern California Association of Governments entered into partnerships with six local governments and made grants for an initial round of demonstration projects. These will focus on changing local land use and transportation plans, and the decisions based on them, to implement the 2% Strategy.
- **In Alabama**, a multi-sector partnership, Region 2020, saw housing and transportation quickly rise to the top as issues through their engagement process. As a tangible response, they created the Housing Enterprise of Central Alabama (HECA), which helps low-income families achieve homeownership, and developed a first-ever two-county regional transportation district. With an initial capitalization of \$64 million from four Birmingham banks, HECA serves as a vehicle for the accountable reinvestment of charitable housing funds. To date, HECA has established a “Homeownership” outreach center, helped rehabilitate owner-occupied homes in a distressed Birmingham neighborhood, and broken ground on 470 affordable owner-occupied homes to be priced at \$109,000 and targeted to families earning \$18,000.
- **In Denver**, a regional campaign led to the passage of a \$4.7 billion package to add 119 miles of new light rail and commuter rail, 18 miles of bus rapid-transit service, 21,000 new parking spaces, and expansion of bus service in all areas over the next 12 years. 30 miles of the system have either opened or are close to being finished. The potential is already affecting development patterns, with the development of several large transit-oriented developments (TOD). A \$750 million project has broken ground that will capitalize on one of the new 19-mile LRT lines and nearby road improvements.
- **In Utah**, a quarter-cent sales-tax increase for creation of the region’s first light rail system resulted in the purchase of 175 miles of existing rights-of-way for nine different potential transit corridors. The guarantee of a light-rail line has led to the largest new TOD (4,000 acres/buildout for 13,600 residents), with one-third of the land dedicated to open space.

* * *

Successful regional initiatives are not accidents. They require significant work, sophisticated use of myriad social and technological tools, and the work of hundreds of leaders and thousands of residents. In the next section, greater detail on Envision Greater Washington is provided.

Envision Greater Washington

Designing and Phasing for Results

Successful efforts establish momentum. Our action steps are designed to keep the ball moving after review, and hopefully agreement, by the three convening organizations. We must do this in a way that embraces the complexity of our region – two states, the District of Columbia, the federal government, and so on. That complexity is also our strength.

This section offers more detail on the characteristics of the effort and offers recommendations on financing and governance.

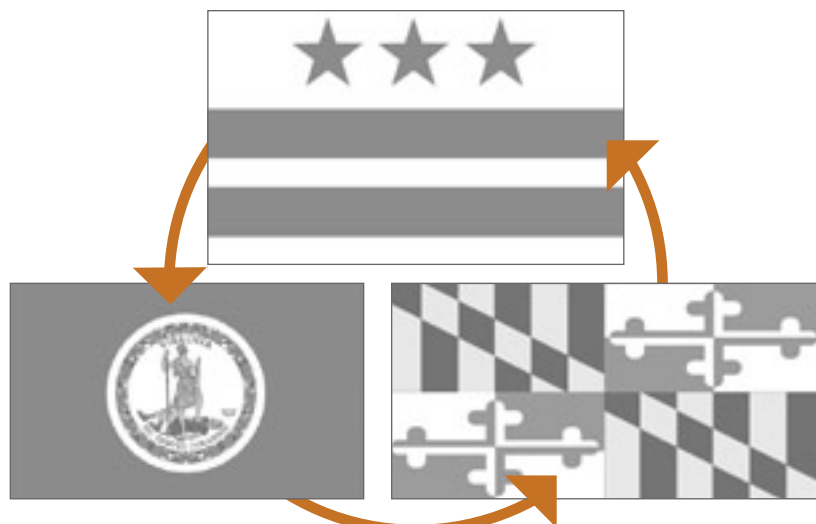
Inclusiveness and Accountability are Key

We have recognized that inclusiveness is a key to success. Some of the kinds of inclusiveness that are essential:

- **Involving residents representing the diversity of our region.** The demographics of our region are changing and will be changing more. Engaging the diversity of our residents is critical and will require non-traditional outreach methods. We recommend exploring approaches such as shopping center kiosks, partnering with coffee shops, working with and through community-based organizations, working in multiple languages and much personal contact.
- **Involving organizations representing the complexity of our region.** It is impossible to engage any one organization and say it represents the region. For instance, the business community is represented by the Board of Trade, numer-

ous chambers of commerce and professional and industry associations. Some businesses do not belong or participate in associations. A similar analysis can be offered for every other sector. Involving a wide range of organizations will be essential to success.

- **Involving states.** The future of the Greater Washington area and that of the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia are inextricably linked. They must be deeply involved in this effort. We have gained some involvement of state officials in the Organizing Committee and believe their enhanced role moving forward is essential.
- **Involving the federal government.** The federal government is still our largest employer. Its decisions on locations for civilian and defense job sites drives requirements for



local investments in infrastructure and area development. Job site decisions also drive personal housing decisions, which then affect commuting patterns. A federal representative was engaged in the Organizing Committee, and enhanced federal involvement will be needed.

Who decides when there are so many players? An accountability framework helps participants understand who will make decisions and how they will be made. Accountability frameworks help organizations and individuals connect to and work with each other. An accountability framework will be created during the next phase of developing the initiative, and recommended to the convening organizations.

Phasing the Effort

Any effort this complex will have phases. This document represents the culmination of Phase 1, the assessment of whether a regional visioning initiative makes sense, and if so, how. The proposed future phases are listed below and are self-explanatory. Further detail on each phase is provided in the Appendix.

- **Phase 2:** More Engagement, Values Research, and Scenario Building (Fall-Winter 2006-7)
- **Phase 3:** Official Launch, Grassroots Strategy, and Choicework on Scenarios (Spring 2007 - Spring 2008)
- **Phase 4:** Developing Implementation Strategies (Continuous – Spring 2008)
- **Phase 5:** Implementation, Action and Continuing Work (Summer/Fall 2008 and ongoing)

Budget and Financing

This is a major effort. It will require a broad-based, responsible, patient funding base that includes public, business and civic investments, reflecting the range of interests for whom this work is central to their missions. Investors must be committed to the long-term health of the region so that the work is independent of short-term tactical considerations and of any one sector or jurisdiction.

We believe that many share this goal, and that costs can be apportioned among the sectors and organizations within each sector so that the cost to any one entity is reasonable. Further, funding commitments would likely be phased, reflecting the diversity of budgeting cycles.

Several critical aspects of this effort require significant funds, including the values research, scenario development, civic engagement and marketing. The current estimate of a reasonable budget for this two- to three-year effort is \$3 - \$5 million.

Several important variables drive the range in costs. Some important questions about the overall scope and scale remain. From an implementation standpoint there are a number of unknowns, including whether key institutions will be able to donate significant in-kind resources, the completeness of key data sets and whether research will need to be done, and staffing and consultant costs.

BUDGET AND FINANCE RECOMMENDATION

With approval and support of the convening organizations, funding would be sought for Phase 2 tasks, which will range from \$650,000 to \$800,000. This will allow the Organizing Committee to conduct values research, initial scenario development, organizational engagement, and convenings around governance and accountability. Further, Phase 2 tasks will be of value, whether or not the full effort moves forward. During Phase 2, the overall scale and scope will be refined and implementation questions addressed in order to prepare a clear budget and financing strategy for future phases and the overall initiative.

A fuller description of Phase 2 tasks can be found in the Appendix.

Managing the Initiative: Possible Approaches

Determining the management, leadership and staffing of this effort will be among the important decisions to be made. And, unfortunately, as some regions have learned, mistakes can be made. Therefore, we must make this decision carefully, ensuring we have established a foundation that will allow us to move forward inclusively, constructively and efficiently. Regional visioning initiatives around the country have chosen different leadership and management structures. There are generally three related elements that must be decided in developing a structure:

- **Governance.** Who sits on the managing board? Is the board advisory or decision-making? Do the members of the board represent individuals or organizations?
- **Hosting.** Is the project hosted at an existing organization? Is a new organization created? Are hosting and fiscal management together or separate?

Table 1: Analysis of Governance Options

GOVERNANCE	SMALL NUMBER OF PARTNERS	LARGER NUMBER OF PARTNERS	BROAD BOARD	SINGLE SECTOR LED
Example of Model	Birmingham 2020	Crossroads Charlotte	Envision Utah Envision Central Texas	Chicago Metropolis Blueprint Sacramento
What this Really Means	Something similar to current arrangement with reps from 3-4 organizations forming a new board.	A larger number of organizational partners (15-25) sending 1-3 people to comprise board.	A large number of people with stature in the community (TX had 73).	COG, BOT or GWI leading effort, perhaps with guidance from a multi-sector advisory board.
Establishes Legitimacy and Neutrality across Diverse Constituencies	Medium Some will not connect to small # of organizations.	High Most likely to represent diversity of community.	Medium While large # of reps helps people connect, it is individuals, not organizations.	Medium Single sectors have stature ... and baggage.
Creates Sustainable Capacity	Medium If a partner withdraws, this situation is less stable over the long haul.	High More resilient with more partners.	Medium Depends greatly on nature of board.	High Organization is likely to be there for the long haul.
Efficient in Work and Actions	High	Medium	Medium	High
	Assessment is based on simple maxim that a smaller and less diverse board is likely to be more efficient.			
Effective: Will come to closure and be able to implement	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
	Assessment focuses on presence of organizations from all sectors that can and will deliver based on their participation			

- **Staffing.** Is the staffing all at one organization or does it draw from many? What is the balance between staff and consultants?

Various governance options, drawn from the models used by other regional initiatives, are analyzed in Table 1. Hosting and staffing recommendations will be developed during Phase 2.

No matter which option is selected, all regional initiatives develop a model that is:

- Regional in footprint
- Cross-sector in composition
- Broadly representative of organizational and community leadership

POSSIBLE HOSTS

There are several existing regional organizations that could “manage” a strategic regional visioning initiative as a “project.”

They include:

- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is governed by representatives from 20 local jurisdictions, and is by far the most comprehensive organization dedicated to regional problem-solving. Housed with COG is the Transportation Planning Board, which is responsible for planning and funding the region's major transportation infrastructure projects. COG has housed other regional initiatives such as the Washington Area Housing Trust Fund, which is a public/private initiative that provides seed capital for affordable housing developments throughout the region.
- The Washington Smart Growth Alliance (SGA), a cross-sector initiative focused on growth issues, has spent the last four years building trust among the business/real estate and environmental/smart growth communities. The SGA is comprised of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Coalition for Smarter Growth, Enterprise Community Partners, Greater Washington Board of Trade, Metropolitan Washington Builders' Council and ULI Washington.
- The Greater Washington Initiative is a cross-sector partnership of local governments and business that markets greater Washington to businesses around the world.

If these organizations are not amenable to serving as hosts or are not seen as appropriate, a new organization could be created.

GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATION

The Organizing Committee proposes, should this effort move forward, to analyze the governance and hosting options and work collaboratively with all interested institutions to recommend a governance and hosting approach to the convening organizations.

* * *

As we grow, will we pull together or pull apart? What is the price tag, in loss of family time, cost of doing business and increased taxes, in continuing to grow as we are today? Are we prepared to spend what will be needed for transportation, schools and other public services if our region continues to spread? Do we have the right regional systems for making the right decisions to ensure the future health of our region? Perhaps most importantly, are we doing everything we can to provide our children, grandchildren and new neighbors with a place they will not only want to call home but can afford to make their home?

We believe that the answers to these questions are clear:

- We must pull together.
- The price tag of not acting in new and more effective ways could be very high.
- We are already resisting the price tag of current growth; the future will only become more expensive.
- We have a strong foundation of regional action and organizations, but more can and should be done to enable us to work together on how and where we grow in the future.
- The time is now to launch a regional visioning effort to guide our way into continued prosperity that is increasingly shared by all.
- The basic elements of a strategic visioning effort are reasonably clear, the likelihood of improved outcomes as a result are probable, and detailed implementation plans can and will be developed during the initiative process.
- The cost of a regional strategic visioning initiative is a small investment with potentially major returns in reduced costs and improved economic and social results.

In sum, the time for action is now. Working together, we can make our region a better place for ourselves, our children and our children's children.

Appendix A

Phasing the Effort

Initial work has been done to establish the phasing of this effort past the current assessment and recommendation phase. The phases will become more refined as additional organizations are engaged and further work is completed.

PHASE 2: MORE ENGAGEMENT, VALUES RESEARCH AND SCENARIO BUILDING (FALL-WINTER 2006-7)

Having completed the first phase of planning in the 90-day exploratory effort, we recommend launching Phase 2 to lay major groundwork for the initiative, including:

- Engage more organizations in the effort. Many more organizations than those represented on the Organizing Committee need to be briefed about and engaged in the effort. This work will start with individual meetings and likely lead toward gatherings in the late fall. This outreach will be linked to the scenario development. Briefings will include helping prospective participants understand the urgency, describing the initiative, inviting their participation, discussing possible accountability frameworks and exploring possible commitments to implementation.
- Initiate values research and/or polling. One of the most important steps in developing a regional strategy will be to conduct values research across the region – a way to listen and to understand the language, priorities and attitudes that define growth and development issues. Distilling these values is critical to developing effective public communications programs.
- Initiate scenario development. In scenario planning, professionals and residents work together, using a variety of tools and techniques to assess trends in transportation, technology, demographics, land use, educational attainment, economic development patterns, energy use and more. These provide fact-based data to guide scenario development. Work in Phase 2 will start with an assessment of the available data sets to ascertain what research will need to be done to construct meaningful scenarios.
- Develop an accountability framework. Participants will work to develop an accountability framework that is fully a part of the overall governance of the effort. The accountability framework will include how information flows and decisions are made.
- Engage in fundraising. As the effort strives for diversity from all sectors and jurisdictions, so we will seek to ensure that our funding reflects an equitable split as well. Different organizations will be able to contribute in different ways. For instance, some public agencies may be able to provide valuable in-kind support during the scenario-building process. This will include immediate work on raising initial contributions for Phase 2.
- Develop governance and hosting recommendations. As regional initiatives have matured around the country, different initiatives have chosen different leadership structures. This is discussed in more detail previously in this paper, but the goal will be governance that provides legitimacy, authenticity, and transparency.
- Develop an interactive web site. This is critical to this process. It can provide a tool for collecting stories from residents of the region and a blog to interact with residents about issues facing the region, report on results and sustain participation in the process.

While there will be continuous communication with the convenors throughout this effort, the Organizing Committee proposes a formal check to consider recommendations at the conclusion of this phase in early 2007.

PHASE 3: OFFICIAL LAUNCH, GRASSROOTS STRATEGY, AND CHOICEWORK ON SCENARIOS (SPRING 2007 - SPRING 2008)

Regional visioning efforts make their mark in this phase. This is the period where the fruits of months of developmental work goes public, with an official, high-profile launch, numerous public meetings and much publicity.

- Conduct extensive outreach. Successful meetings happen when they are preceded by extensive outreach. Strategies will include a wide array of traditional and nontraditional approaches, such as using micro-targeting, to reach specific demographic groups and attain explicit outreach goals. One strategy will be to work through employers to reach people in their workplaces.
- Engage stakeholders and residents. There will be a multi-layered, multi-sector, strategy with a range of small, medium and large meetings anchored by a small number of large summits at pivotal points in the process. The face-to-face meetings will be complemented by an array of other devices including extensive use of the web site, email and other technology-enabled approaches. The engagement will be closely intertwined with a strategy of initially allowing participants to learn about and evaluate the scenarios, to be followed by work that refines the scenarios. These refined scenarios will be the subject of a second round of engagement.
- The regional engagement process should be led by local institutions. It is local institutions that will build their capacity to guide regional problem solving efforts, not consultants.

The product of this phase will be the selection of a preferred scenario. This work may be augmented by work on particular issues that have emerged through the process. This could include more focused work on land use and transportation, work on topics such as workforce development or education, or more place-based work.

PHASE 4: DEVELOPING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (CONTINUOUS – SPRING 2008)

Work on implementation starts from the beginning of this effort and will culminate in this phase, turning agreement into action. This will have two components. First will be the straightforward work of action planning and building commitments. This phase will likely include a focus on action as well – especially targeting low-hanging fruit.

All too often, when large-scale public agreements are reached, the agreement is given to staff who are charged with making things happen. This work, and the agreements that were reached, often become invisible to the greater public, reducing their weight and value. In order to counteract this tendency, the second component will be a campaign to educate people about the decisions reached in this effort to build awareness of and commitment to the outcomes. It is this step that helps maintain and further build momentum, leading to political support for those who must implement the hard choices.

PHASE 5: IMPLEMENTATION, ACTION AND CONTINUING WORK (SUMMER/FALL 2008 AND ONGOING)

Action and change will be the result of much hard work. Significant success will occur when individuals and organizations – of every kind – work together on a shared vision. This effort will be successful if we have helped:

- The residents of the region understand that choices about where they live and in what type of housing, and their transportation and personal lifestyle choices, have a tremendous impact on the future of the region. They will support positive development patterns important to the sustainable region and prosperity for all residents. Their deeper understanding will lead to support for public officials and business leaders making similar choices.
- Public officials lead efforts for public policies that create a more sustainable region with prosperity for all residents.
- Employers invest in and make decisions that support the shared vision.
- Developers create new communities and housing options with greater understanding of these new market forces and the importance of connecting land use and transportation.

Envision Greater Washington Organizing Committee

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Sam	Black	Chairman	Washington Smart Growth Alliance
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Nancy	Floreen	Councilmember	Montgomery County Council
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RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE:

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments | Greater Washington Board of Trade | Community Foundation for the National Capital Region