



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING

Livable Frederick Planning & Design Office

Deborah A. Carpenter, AICP, Division Director
Kimberly Gaines, Director

Investing in Worker & Workplaces Advisory Group Meeting 2 May 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes

I. Meeting Details

Meeting date and time: Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 2:00 PM

Meeting location: Division of Economic Opportunity, 118 N. Market Street, MD 21701

II. Attendance

Advisory Group members present: Andrew Brown, Chris Smariga, Danielle Adams, Brian Morris, Lisa Graditor, Karen Cannon, Taylor Davis, Don Pleasants, Eric Soter, Kai Hagen, Matt Holbrook, Tony Checchia

Advisory Group members absent: Louise Kennelly

County staff: DPP: Kimberly Gaines, Denis Superczynski, Karin Flom, Andrew Stine, Justin Burkner; DEO: Lara Fritts, Troy Bolyard, Beth Woodring, Michelle Day; Jodie Bollinger; Office of Agriculture: Katie Stevens

III. Call to Order

Beth Woodring brought the meeting to order at 2:00 PM and welcomed the advisory group members and guests.

IV. Overview of Baseline Data / Current Conditions

Denis Superczynski explained that today's meeting would be focused on data.

Michelle Day, Director of Workforce Services, presented workforce data. She noted the County's population as of February of 2024, 306,919 residents, and the County's unemployment rate – around 2.7%. Ms. Day noted that the unemployment rate represents people who are actively seeking employment. Labor force participation is at 56% with roughly 105,000 residents not working and not actively looking for work. With the pandemic, many people retired early.

Commuter patterns were described, with many employees traveling from Washington, Montgomery, and Howard counties to jobs in Frederick County. Ms. Day provided an overview of employment by industry, with the government sector as the largest employer, followed by retail and then health.

Ms. Day described the County's growing 65+ population. Challenges associated with aging in place were discussed. Questions were raised concerning where the County's older residents will live.

Mr. Superczynski presented population forecasts; demographic trends concerning age, race, and ethnicity; maps depicting housing development over the past century; residential permit activity over

the past five years; and the residential development pipeline (links below). The housing developments and housing unit types represented in the pipeline were discussed.

[Interactive Pipeline Map](#) [Static Pipeline Map](#)

Mr. Superczynski reviewed the strengths and weaknesses described in the previous meeting. These include regulatory issues, long-range planning policy, infrastructure, regional geography, educated citizens and leadership, workforce characteristics.

Mr. Superczynski led a discussion of opportunities and threats. He reminded the group of one of the core purposes of this planning effort – to increase the commercial tax base, which is declining, to alleviate the tax burden on County residents.

It was noted that regional job growth has increased 2.2%, which is below the national average of 3.9%. Time to market was also described as an issue beyond a constrained land inventory.

The Priority Preservation Area (PPA) was discussed, with a comment that land preservation has been used to block orderly development. Katie Stevens noted that removal of land from the PPA could result in loss of State certification of the County's Agricultural Land Preservation Program and reduced State funding for the program.

Threats identified included the lack of affordable housing, limited transportation options, and the availability of public water and sewer. The healthcare industry was discussed, particularly the need for more employees in this industry at all levels as the County's older population grows.

Questions were raised concerning market needs. What requests are being made of Economic Opportunity staff? What are employers looking for? Beth Woodring offered to provide additional information to address these questions at the next Advisory Group meeting. She noted that Economic Opportunity continues to see interest from the life sciences industry. Ms. Woodring also noted that, in partnership with the Maryland Department of Commerce, Economic Opportunity staff have been responding to international inquiries with these prospects seeking land to purchase, not lease.

Planning for June 11 Meeting

Kimberly Gaines stated that at the June 11 meeting the group will begin consideration of geography/mapping for employment growth. Tony Checchia will share the analysis of ORI/LI/GI that this office has been working on. Economic Opportunity will continue the conversation of site selection data and employer needs today and into the future.

VIII. Adjournment

With no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.