

NAIOP

MARYLAND CHAPTERS



THE ASSOCIATION FOR
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

February 10, 2026

The Honorable, Kriselda Valderrama, Chair
House Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Favorable: HB 243 – Alteration of Comprehensive Plan Elements

Dear Chair, Valderrama and Committee Members:

The NAIOP Maryland Chapters represent approximately 700 companies involved in all aspects of commercial, industrial, and mixed-use real estate. On behalf of our member companies, I am writing to request your favorable report on HB 243.

First, we want to thank the Secretary of Planning for her time and engagement in explaining the goals and intent behind this legislation. Her leadership in articulating the need for modernized comprehensive planning elements has been extremely helpful to stakeholders and has informed our support for the bill.

HB 243 revises the required elements of local comprehensive land use plans and reorients planning around six key subject areas: Land, Transportation, Economy, Equity, Resilience, and Ecology. The bill strengthens the planning framework by requiring plans be based on current and future conditions and to align with the content of existing state-level plans.

NAIOP's understanding of the legislation is that the proposed amendments are intended to ensure that comprehensive plans take a broader, more flexible approach to planning. This is critical for local jurisdictions as they seek to accommodate future development opportunities without being constrained by overly specific, parcel-level concepts that can limit responsiveness to changing economic and community conditions.

Market-driven trends and resident preferences are evolving at a faster pace than ever before—often outpacing the 10-year intervals during which master plans are updated. As a result, concepts embedded in master plans can become outdated long before the next planning cycle begins. Maryland's planning framework must account for this evolution and provide room for innovation and redevelopment that may not have been envisioned five or six years earlier.

The Department of Planning's approach reflects an understanding of this challenge. By encouraging comprehensive plans that prioritize adaptability, the bill would help ensure that Maryland's planning documents remain relevant and useful throughout their life cycle. Our industry needs this flexibility to deliver successful development and redevelopment projects that meet economic, environmental, and community needs as they emerge—not just as they were anticipated years earlier. We support the Department's efforts to modernize and improve the planning process.

For these reasons, NAIOP respectfully requests your favorable report on HB 243.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T.M. Ballentine', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tom Ballentine, Vice President for Policy
NAIOP – Maryland Chapters, *The Association for Commercial Real Estate*

cc: House Economic Matters Committee Members
Nick Manis – Manis, Canning Assoc.