

## *You can help build better communities*

### *Growth is inevitable*

We can't stop growing, but we can manage that growth. We must make the best use of our investment of land and financial resources to accommodate future population and economic growth. Current development patterns are wasteful. Land consumption in the Chesapeake Bay's watershed is estimated at over 100,000 acres per year. That's an area approximately 2.5 times the size of Washington, D.C., every year. This type of land use requires enormous investment in roads, sewers, and other infrastructure. It saps opportunities to invest in parks, schools, and other community needs. We must be more efficient by encouraging more compact growth in and to cities, towns, and villages. We must create a transportation system that will both help build and serve these more efficient development patterns.

### *Better management*

State governments can give local governments broad authority for land-use planning and zoning, with clear environmental and other objectives to meet. States can also provide for regional (county-wide or even multi-county) land and transportation planning. State governments need to be more careful about how and where they spend transportation dollars, since new or wider roads and other public facilities often spur sprawl.

Local governments can help to focus growth in those areas that have already invested public money in roads, sewers,

and other infrastructure. Farm or forestland that is intended to be rural or working open space can be zoned to help keep it that way. There are ways to give farmers and forest owners additional equity. Cities, towns, and villages should be zoned to attract economic and residential growth, mixing land uses and densities.

### *You can help*

There are many things you can do to effect change. Some opportunities are listed below.

#### *Join the Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation's mission is to restore and sustain the Bay's ecosystem by substantially improving the water quality and productivity of the watershed, with respect to water clarity, resilience of the system, and diversity and abundance of living resources, and to maintain a high quality of life for the people of the Chesapeake Bay region. CBF has more than 100,000 members. You can join them by calling 888-SAVEBAY.

#### *Become a Chesapeake Bay Foundation BaySaver*

BaySavers actively educate decision makers about policies that affect the Bay, our economy, and public health. They help restore natural systems through oyster gardening, underwater grass plantings, riparian buffer restoration, and volunteer training. The *BaySaver Bulletin* provides up-to-date information on legislation and how to contact public figures. The BaySaver Institute trains volunteers to be influential speakers on important environmental topics.

#### *Join the Chesapeake Bay Action Network*

Many of the changes that government and business must make to improve the Bay can be delayed or ignored unless we can demonstrate vigorous citizen support. The network helps to mobilize this vital support. To join, visit [www.savethebay.cbf.org](http://www.savethebay.cbf.org).

#### *Know the issues*

Educate yourself and others through:  
*A Better Way to Grow*, 1996, a CBF publication  
*A Network of Livable Communities*, 1996, EDF & CBF publication  
Call 888-SAVEBAY to order or locate.

### *Be an active, concerned citizen*

#### *Learn about your community's plans*

Each town, township, city, or county usually has a land use plan, called the master or comprehensive plan. If yours doesn't, it's probably time for it to develop one. This plan is a guide for where homes, businesses, and parks are to be developed and built. Your community's plan can be found at the town/community office, usually in a planning and zoning department, at the planning commission, or sometimes in the public library.

Communities often have other legal means for managing growth and development. Your town/county probably has a zoning ordinance and perhaps subdivision regulations. Zoning, for example, sets rules for the location of land uses, how many houses per acre are allowed in each part of the locality, how tall buildings can be, and other restrictions. Subdivision rules set how far back from the street houses must be, the amount of parking, and the widths of streets.

#### *Participate in decision making regularly*

- Attend meetings of your planning commission. At these meetings, the planning commission makes recommendations to the county/town council or commissioners concerning changes in land use plans or zoning, and requests by developers for particular projects.
- Participate in the process for reviewing and making significant changes to the local land use plan or zoning ordinance, which occurs every few years.

### *Promote better-designed growth*

Promote compact and in-fill development, within or immediately adjacent to your community. Encourage your community to establish strong local regulations that make the rural countryside off-limits for growth.

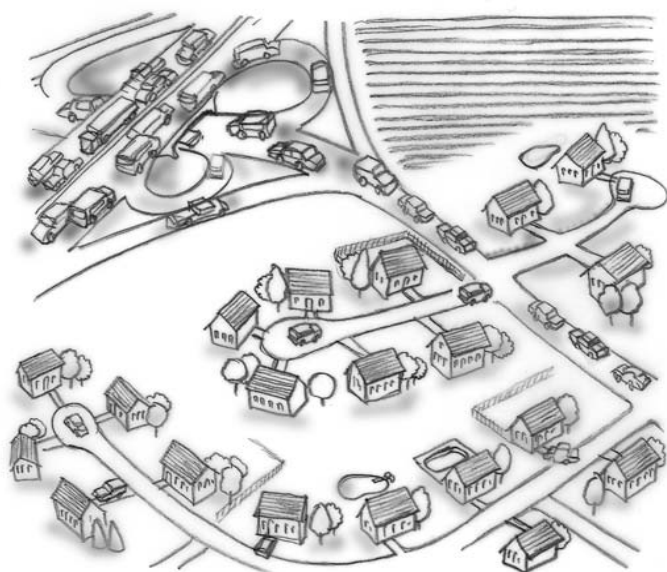
#### *Join other local efforts*

Contact local organizations that are interested and involved in local land use and growth issues. Civic associations, church groups, local environmental groups, historic preservation groups, and others would likely welcome your participation.

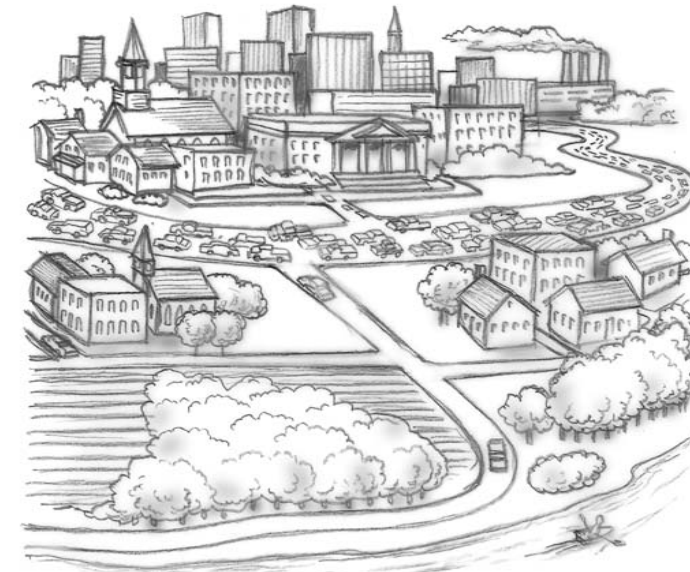
### *Make your own smart growth choices*

Your personal decisions influence suburban sprawl. Buying a large lot in what was recently forest or farmland in distant suburbs, and commuting great distances by car, may not be as good for your family and the Bay as living, shopping, and conducting business nearby. When contemplating where to locate a business, think about the benefits of putting it where people already live, or on good transit lines. Of course there are other factors involved in making these important decisions, but at least we can begin making informed choices about our lifestyles.

For more information call the Chesapeake Bay Foundation at 1-888-SAVEBAY or visit our website at [www.savethebay.cbf.org](http://www.savethebay.cbf.org).



*Conventional development*



*Smart development*

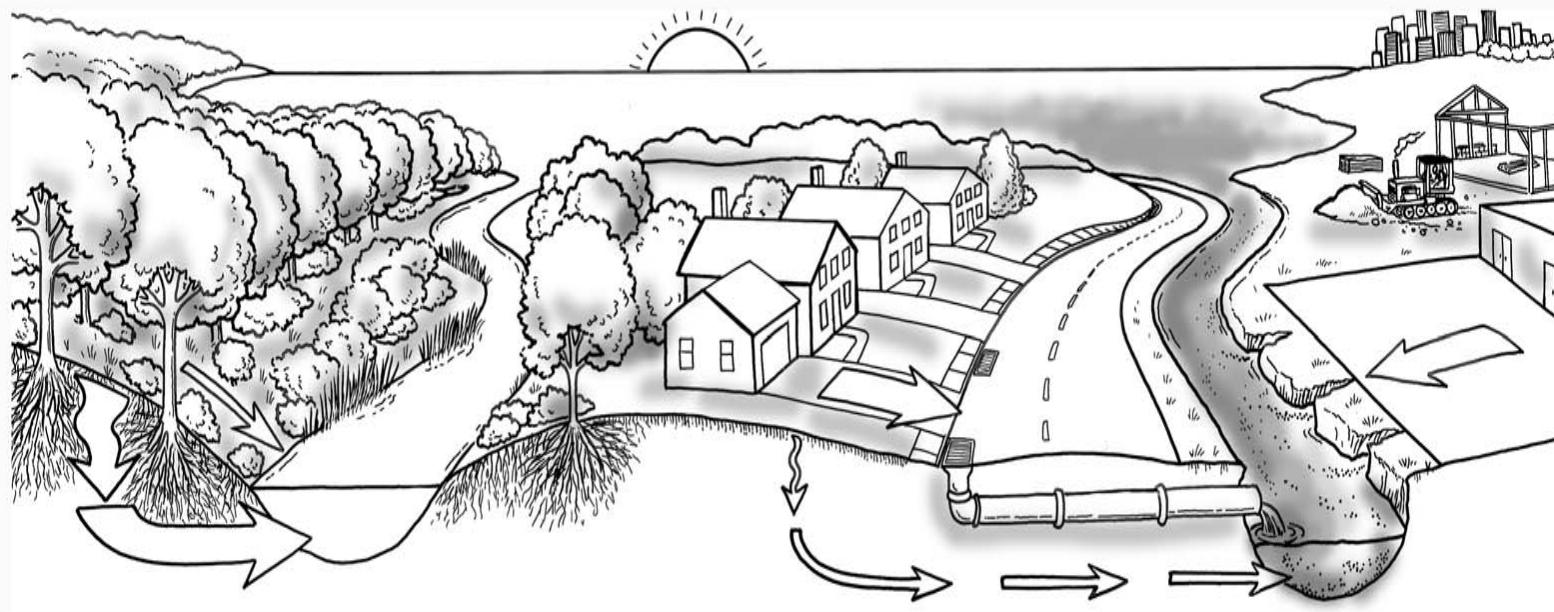
## Land, the Bay, and you

Land-use patterns are important to the quality of our everyday lives. Where we live relates directly to how easy or difficult it is to get to work, school, or the store, to the park, the movies, or the library. Can we walk or bike around safely, or do we need to drive to buy a loaf of bread or a quart of milk?

Land use directly affects the environment. The land can be a green filter, with rainwater hitting tree leaves and soaking slowly into the ground, or it can be a gray funnel, promoting quick and damaging runoff from parking lots, roads, construction sites, and poorly managed farms. When it rains, sediment and a wide variety of pollutants can run quickly and directly to the streams and rivers that feed into the Chesapeake Bay.

The Bay is uniquely vulnerable to the way land is used. The watershed of the Bay (all the land that drains to the Bay) is huge—64,000 square miles with 100,000 streams and rivers. But the water volume in the Bay is relatively small. The Bay has an average depth of just 22 feet. As the watershed's forests, farms, fields, and wetlands are lost to poorly planned, sprawling suburbs, the Bay loses much of its ability to heal itself. Water quality is degraded and fisheries are deprived of essential habitat.

As this pattern of land use—or, more accurately, misuse—continues, the need to travel by car increases. Traffic congestion worsens. We build more roads. It's a vicious cycle. Even our cities and towns, our already existing communities, are adversely affected as people migrate to areas that may seem rural, but whose character is soon changed forever.



*Land can be a green filter, where rainwater hits tree leaves and soaks slowly into the ground...*

*...or it can be a gray funnel that promotes rapid and damaging runoff.*

## We have a choice

For more information on how you can help, contact CBF or any of the other organizations listed below.

### Chesapeake Bay Foundation

**Headquarters**  
Philip Merrill Environmental Center  
6 Herndon Ave., Annapolis, MD 21403  
410/268-8816

**Maryland Office**  
Philip Merrill Environmental Center  
6 Herndon Ave., Annapolis, MD 21403  
410/268-8833

**Pennsylvania Office**  
The Old Water Works Building  
614 North Front St., Suite G, Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717/ 234-5550

**Virginia Office**  
Capitol Place, 1108 E. Main St., Suite 1600  
Richmond, VA 23219  
804/780-1392

Website: [savethebay.cbf.org](http://savethebay.cbf.org)  
E-mail: [chesapeake@cbf.org](mailto:chesapeake@cbf.org)  
Membership Information: 1-888-SAVETHEBAY

**1000 Friends of Maryland**  
1209 Calvert St., Baltimore, MD 21202  
410/385-2910

**10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania**  
117 S. 17th St., Suite 2300, Philadelphia, PA 19103-5022  
215/568-2225

**Environmental Defense**  
1875 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009, St. 600  
202/387-3500

**Nature Conservancy International Headquarters**  
4245 North Fairfax Dr., Suite 100, Arlington, VA 22203-1606  
703/841-5300 or 800/628-6860

**Pennsylvania Land Trust Association**  
105 Locust St., Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717/230-8560

**Piedmont Environmental Council**  
P.O. Box 460, 45 Horner St., Warrenton, VA 20188  
540/347-2334

**Valley Conservation Council**  
P.O. Box 2335, Staunton, VA 24402  
540/886-3541

**Washington Regional Network**  
1777 Church St., NW, Washington, DC 20036  
202/667-5445

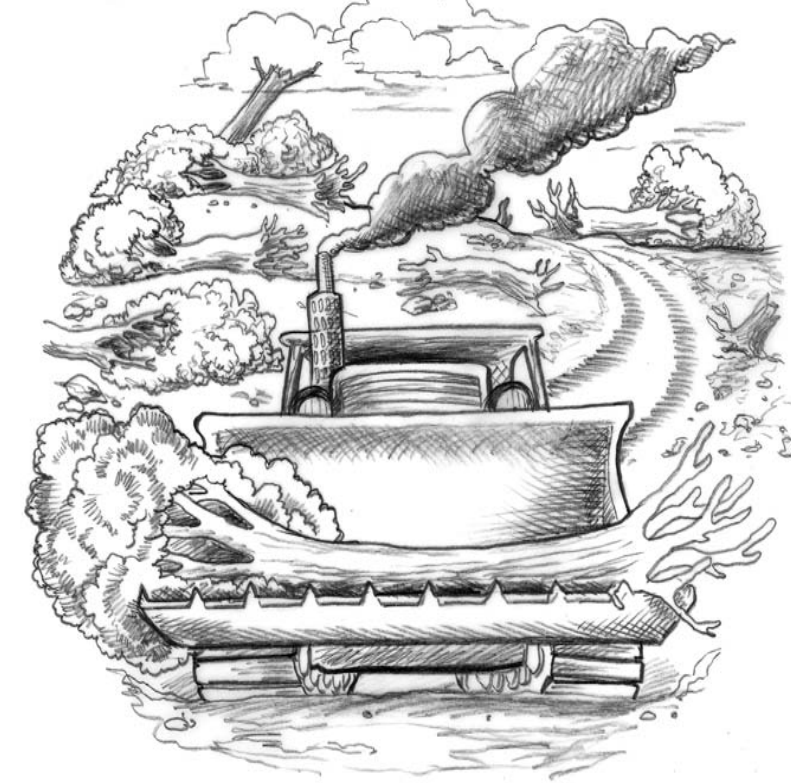


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## Growth, Sprawl, & the Bay

# Stopping Sprawl

## How we can build better communities



**A citizen's guide to land use around the Chesapeake Bay**



**CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION**  
*Save the Bay*