



**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Planning Department, Montgomery County, Maryland  
8787 Georgia Avenue Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MCPB Date: 4/25/19  
Agenda Item #

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 17, 2019

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Gwen Wright, Planning Director *GW*  
Tanya Stern, Deputy Director

**FROM:** Bridget Schwiesow, Communications Manager *BS*  
Khalid Afzal, Special Projects Manager, General Plan Update,  
Caroline McCarthy, Chief, Research and Special Projects Division

**SUBJECT:** General Plan Update Draft Communication Strategy Briefing

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive briefing from staff and the consultant and provide comments.

**Introduction**

The Planning Department's approved FY19 Work Program includes an update of the county's General Plan. In June 2018, the Department hired Rhodeside & Harwell to develop: 1) a strategic framework for the plan update; and 2) a comprehensive outreach and communication strategy. On January 17, 2019, Staff and the consultant presented to the Board the draft strategic framework for the Update that identified three core values of Equity, Economy and Environment as the conceptual underpinning of the Update. At today's briefing, staff will present a conceptual framework of the proposed communication strategy to the Board for review and comments. The communications strategy was informed by many stakeholder interviews, a review of best practices from other jurisdictions, and available audience data; and was developed with Gwen Wright's guidance. The communications goals presented in the strategy will shape the outreach and marketing efforts for the update to the General Plan and include a special focus on reaching historically underrepresented audiences to ensure a reflection of community values and priorities. Communications consultant Anne Boyle and Communications Manager Bridget Schwiesow will present the strategy to seek feedback from the Board.

**Next Steps**

Staff will continue to work with the consultant to finalize the communications strategy that will guide the work of the staff team working on the General Plan Update in 2019 and beyond. The consultant's work is expected to be completed in the next few weeks. Staff will then prepare a detailed Scope of Work for the project and present it to the Board for review and approval in May 2019.