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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Glassman Administration's Final Draft of HarfordNEXT Goes Online May 4; Countywide Master Plan to Enhance Quality of Living in Harford County

BEL AIR, Md., (May 2, 2016) - On Wednesday, May 4, the administration of County Executive Barry Glassman will publish online the final draft of a countywide master plan to enhance the quality of living in Harford County. Known as HarfordNEXT – A Master Plan for the Next Generation, the draft will be accessible from the homepage of the county website www.harfordcountymd.gov. Those without Internet access may arrange to view the plan by calling 410-638-3103.

In development since April 2015, HarfordNEXT is a visionary document outlining broad goals, big ideas, and actionable recommendations to guide county planning decisions through the year 2040. The Glassman administration's balanced plan promotes opportunities for economic prosperity while protecting the county's valued natural resources.

HarfordNEXT is a departure from previous master plans that were over 700 pages long and organized around separate "element plans" such as the Natural Resources Element Plan, Transportation Element Plan, and Priority Preservation Area Plan. HarfordNEXT unifies the separate elements into a cohesive, streamlined plan. Focus areas include land use, mobility and connectivity, environmental stewardship, agricultural and historic preservation, economic vitality, and healthy communities. A separate section highlights the unique assets and opportunities for seven planning areas that together comprise the entire county. The draft is

further enhanced by infographics, specialized maps, and lists of facts and figures including population projections, building permits, and acres of land preserved.

Big ideas introduced in HarfordNEXT include holistic transportation planning that emphasizes livability over simple vehicle mobility. Other ideas include green infrastructure planning, a renewed emphasis on preservation, and “form based” zoning that considers the design and operation of a proposed development.

Community input considered throughout the development phase of HarfordNEXT was facilitated by unprecedented levels of public outreach, including a variety of online engagement tools.

“I would like to thank the many citizens, businesses, and community organizations who gave us their ideas for HarfordNEXT,” said County Executive Barry Glassman. “I would also like to thank my Dept. of Planning & Zoning and Director Brad Killian for their outstanding work bringing together this shared vision for our county.”

HarfordNEXT is subject to approval by the County Council followed by submission to the state. The state of Maryland requires countywide master plans to be updated at least every 10 years.

The following is the text of a letter from County Executive Glassman introducing his administration’s final draft of HarfordNEXT:

Dear Harford County Citizens:

In May of 1608, Captain John Smith wrote the following passage in his diary as he navigated the rocks and viewed the Susquehanna River near what was to become Harford County:

“Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man’s habitation. Here are mountains, hills, plains, valleys, rivers and brookes all running most pleasant into a faire bay.”

As a native of Harford County, I know that we live in a special place, and it is very important to me that we plan to keep it that way. Yet our maturing county is at a crossroads. As we take steps toward a vision that allows us to remain successful for the next several decades, we must find the right balance between our future and protecting our precious land and water resources.

With that in mind, I am pleased to present HarfordNEXT - A Master Plan for the Next Generation. This forward-looking and visionary comprehensive plan lays out our aspirational policies and goals in a flexible framework that will allow the county government to encourage economic growth while enhancing our quality of place. Arising from the most transparent

planning process in Harford County history, HarfordNEXT is also our most accessible master plan, written in plain language for anyone to understand and share in our county's bright future.

Our ultimate goal is to maintain and enhance Harford County's quality of life. HarfordNEXT represents a bold and imaginative vision that will make our community stronger and prosperous for generations.

I look forward to working toward this vision and I thank you in advance for helping to make it a reality.

With every good wish, I remain

Very truly yours,

*Barry Glassman
Harford County Executive*

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