



The State of Maryland

Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2025.19

ADDRESSING MARYLAND'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

WHEREAS, The State of Maryland faces an unprecedented and rapidly growing housing affordability crisis caused by a shortage of at least 96,000 housing units and driven by insufficient housing construction over the past 15 years;

WHEREAS, The increasing unavailability and unaffordability of safe, stable, livable housing for working families has created an imminent threat of widespread social and economic disruption, including severe negative impacts on Maryland's economic and business climate and the inability to retain new people entering the workforce, resulting in a lack of innovation and a stifling of overall economic development;

WHEREAS, The Moore-Miller Administration's commitment to making Maryland a more affordable place to live, work, and raise a family includes ensuring that all Marylanders are able to obtain safe, stable, livable housing that fits their budget;

WHEREAS, State government plays a vital role in fostering an environment that is conducive to the construction of enough housing to serve the needs of the State's residents; and

WHEREAS, In order for Maryland to address its housing crisis and prevent economic stagnation, State government must take action to spur the construction of housing by removing regulatory barriers, accelerating building supply lines, shortening permit waiting times, reforming financing for affordable housing, leveraging State-owned property, and encouraging local jurisdictions to adopt land use rules more favorable to housing construction.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WES MOORE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

A. Developing Housing on State-Owned Land and Accelerating Funding for Affordable Housing.

1. The Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Transportation shall develop strategies to implement

their October 2024 Interagency Agreement on Transit Oriented Development to increase the production of housing near transit stations.

- a) In accordance with the Interagency Agreement, the Department of Transportation will lead the development of land owned by the Department of Transportation for transit-oriented development and will coordinate with the Department of Housing and Community Development on these sites.
- b) The Department of Transportation shall commit to prioritizing development of affordable housing in the development of transit-oriented development projects on land owned by the Department of Transportation.
- c) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall commit to providing bonus points or special consideration to the extent permitted by law in the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program and State Revitalization Programs funding rounds for projects tied to the Department of Transportation's transit-oriented development efforts. •

2. The Department of Transportation shall:

- a) Pursue the development of land owned by the Department of Transportation for dense, mixed-use, transit-oriented development, with housing as a priority goal for the development of these sites;
- b) Coordinate funding and investment with the Department of Housing and Community Development, and other State partners, to support the development of housing at these sites as a priority use; and
- c) Work with local jurisdictions through the transit-oriented development designation process to ensure local jurisdiction planning for transit-oriented development supports housing as a priority use.

3. The Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of General Services shall, in coordination with other executive departments and agencies, identify State-owned land that is:

- a) Subject to the control of the Department of General Services;
- b) Determined to be surplus; and
- c) Appropriate for consideration for the development of housing.

4. The Department of General Services shall:

- a) Maintain a database of parcels of State-owned land identified as appropriate for the development of housing;
- b) For properties that have been identified as suitable for affordable housing by the Department of Housing and Community Development, issue:
 - i. Within 30 days after determination of suitability, a notice of intent to release a request for proposals; and
 - ii. Within 90 days after the issuance of the notice of intent, a request for proposals;
- c) Pursuant to statutory requirements, dispose of State-owned parcels for the development of housing by entering into land disposition agreements with parties that will develop such parcels into new housing units, selected through a competitive process; and
- d) Maximize the housing use of surplus State-owned parcels, whether the parcel remains under State ownership, is subject to long-term lease, or is disposed of, through:
 - i. Reducing the cost of the land or pairing the development of land with funding to create deed-restricted low-income housing, and
 - ii. Exercising the governmental immunity from local zoning laws to the extent permitted by law.

B. State Housing Permitting Acceleration/Ombudsman Creation.

1. Definitions.

- a) "Housing development project" means the new construction or substantial renovation of a residential real estate project.
- b) "Permit related to housing construction" means a permit or approval required by law or regulation to be issued by a principal department of the Executive Branch or a division thereof, to a developer, contractor, or subcontractor in order to commence, continue, or support a housing development project.
- c) "Third-party reviewer" means an independent contractor engaged by the proponent of a housing development project to inspect, review, and provide an independent evaluation, including recommendation for approval or denial, of an application for a State permit related to the housing development project.

2. Each principal department of the Executive Branch that issues permits related to housing construction shall:
 - a) Designate a senior point of contact for coordination and efficient processing of permits related to housing construction;
 - b) By January 1, 2026, submit to the Office of the Governor and the Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council updated permit application processing procedures with timelines for permits related to housing construction;
 - c) By November 21, 2025, draft and submit to the Office of the Governor for review and approval standards and procedures for applicants for State-issued permits related to housing development projects to hire third-party reviewers to help expedite permitting timelines at the applicant's expense, including:
 - i. Registration procedures and required qualifications for third-party reviewers;
 - ii. Rules governing conflicts of interest for third-party reviewers;
 - iii. Procedures for review and approval or denial of recommendations made by third-party reviewers; and
 - iv. Provisions requiring the principal department to follow recommendations made by third-party reviewers except in cases of clear error, serious deficiency, or conflict of interest;
 - d) Upon approval by the Office of the Governor, complete implementation of the new third-party permitting standards and procedures for permits related to housing development projects by March 1, 2026;
 - e) By November 21, 2025, provide to the Office of the Governor a written enumeration and assessment of additional potential legislative, regulatory, and administrative actions to increase efficiency in permitting processes;
 - f) For permit applications that require review by multiple State agencies or by different levels of government, to the extent allowed by law, engage in simultaneous, rather than sequential, review of such permit applications;
 - g) By November 21, 2025, provide written recommendations to the Office of the Governor for ways to increase predictability and transparency related to applications for permits related to housing construction;

- h) Fully digitize permit applications and permit fee payments within the extent of budgetary authority no later than March 1, 2026; and
 - i) Seek every opportunity to provide transparency in the permit application process and, whenever possible, reduce processing times.
- 3. The Department of Housing and Community Development shall:
 - a) By November 21, 2025, draft and submit to the Office of the Governor for review a written plan to accelerate processes related to the distribution of funding for affordable multifamily housing projects, including:
 - i. Awarding of funds and tax credits;
 - ii. Closing of deals, contracts, and loan agreements; and
 - iii. Distribution of awarded funds, including release of construction funds.
 - b) Upon approval by the Office of the Governor, complete implementation of the plan to accelerate the distribution of funding for affordable multifamily housing projects by March 1, 2026.
- 4. The Department of Housing and Community Development shall:
 - a) Designate a State Housing Ombudsman to facilitate navigation through local, State, and federal permitting processes and act as a liaison between the Department of Housing and Community Development, other State agencies, local governments and planning and zoning authorities, housing developers and other stakeholders, and local communities.
 - b) The State Housing Ombudsman's duties shall include:
 - i. Coordinating and reporting on the activities undertaken by executive departments and State agencies pursuant to section B.2 of this Order;
 - ii. Facilitating and participating on the Department of Housing and Community Development's behalf in discussions between units of State government, local government, and housing developers to assist with navigation through permitting requirements and processes;
 - iii. Evaluating if there are opportunities for the state to acquire land to further housing development opportunities;

- iv. Evaluating methods to improve the housing building materials supply chain in the State;
- v. Gathering and compiling information on local permitting and planning and zoning processes throughout the State and identifying "pain points" in those processes; and
- vi. Tracking the progress of housing development projects throughout the State and providing periodic updates to the Department of Housing and Community Development leadership and the Office of the Governor on housing production in Maryland.

C. Establishment of Housing Targets.

- 1. The Department of Housing and Community Development shall:
 - a) Publish on or before January 1, 2026, and every five years thereafter, housing production targets for the State, each county, and each municipality that exercises zoning or planning authority;
 - b) Conduct a public engagement process on draft housing targets; and
 - c) Publish a methodology and supporting basis for calculating the housing production targets.
- 2. The Department of Housing and Community Development shall publish an annual report on January 1, 2027, and each year thereafter that:
 - a) assesses the progress of the State and each local jurisdiction with meeting applicable housing production targets; and
 - b) provides potential solutions to assist the state or a local jurisdiction with meeting applicable housing production targets.

D. Housing Leadership Award


- I. The Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development shall establish an annual Maryland Housing Leadership Award to recognize local jurisdictions that demonstrate outstanding progress in advancing housing opportunities.
- 1. The Award may be granted to jurisdictions that:
 - a) Are on track to meet or exceed housing production targets; or
 - b) Enact policies or legislation that significantly promote the development of housing.

2. The Department of Housing and Community Development may award bonus points to applications for department funding to local jurisdictions that have received a Maryland Housing Leadership Award.

E. General Provisions.

1. This Executive Order shall be implemented in a manner that is consistent with all applicable statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Executive Order shall operate to contravene any State or federal law or to affect the State's receipt of federal funding.
2. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of the Executive Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are severable.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Columbia, this 3rd Day of September, 2025.



Wes Moore
Governor



ATTEST:



Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State